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ABSTRACT

This hearing focuses on the federal role in K-12 mathematics reform. Prepared statements are provided from: William F. Goodling, Committee on Education and Workforce; Dale E. Kildee, Ranking Member, Subcommittee on Early Childhood Youth, and Families; John Kasper, Acting Deputy Associate Administrator Office of Communications, Education, and Media Relations, Environmental Protection Agency; Walter M. Higgins, Chairman of the Board, National Environmental Education and Training Foundation; Bora Simmons, Professor of Curriculum and Instruction, Northern Illinois University; Richard Anderson, Executive Director, Maryland Environmental Business Alliance. Other submissions considered in the hearings are included as appendices. (MM)

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ED 463 976

EXAMINING THE NATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION ACT

HEARING

BEFORE THE

SUBCOMMITTEE ON EARLY CHILDHOOD, YOUTH AND FAMILIES

OF THE

COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION AND THE WORKFORCE

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

ONE HUNDRED SIXTH CONGRESS

SECOND SESSION

HEARING HELD IN WASHINGTON, DC, JUNE 27, 2000

Serial No. 106–113

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Subcommittee on Early Childhood, Youth and Families
Hearing on "Examining the National Environmental Education Act"
June 27, 2000
2175 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C.

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EXAMINING THE NATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION ACT

JUNE 27, 2000
SUBCOMMITTEE ON EARLY CHILDHOOD, YOUTH AND FAMILIES
COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION AND THE WORKFORCE
2175 RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, D.C.

The Subcommittee met, pursuant to notice at 9:30 a.m., in Room 2175, Rayburn House Office Building, Hon. William Goodling [Chairman of the Committee] presiding.

Present: Representatives Goodling, Petri, Castle, Schaffer, Hilleary, DeMint, Kildee, Payne, Mink, Woolsey, Ford, and Wu

Staff Present: Becky Campoverde, Communications Director; Linda Castleman, Office Manager; George Conant, Professional Staff Member; Pam Davidson, Professional Staff Member; Dan Lara; Press Secretary; Sally Lovejoy, Senior Education Policy Advisor; Patrick Lyden, Professional Staff Member; Jo-Marie St. Martin, General Counsel; Kent Talbert, Professional Staff Member; Kevin Talley, Staff Director; Holli Traud, Administrative Staff Assistant; Cedric Hendricks, Deputy Counsel; June Harris, Education Coordinator; Alex Nock, Legislative Associate/Education; Roxana Folescu, Staff Assistant/Education.

OPENING STATEMENT OF CHAIRMAN WILLIAM F. GOODLING, COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION AND THE WORKFORCE

Chairman Goodling. The Committee will come to order.

Good morning. Chairman Castle will be with us briefly, I hope. He was called away to another meeting temporarily.

It is my pleasure to welcome you here today to our subcommittee hearing on ``Examining the National Environmental Education Act.'' This morning we will review the implementation and administration of the programs contained within the Act, talk about what works and what does not work in environmental education, and seek recommendations as to where improvements can be made.

For over 20 years, the federal government has played a role in providing the resources for promoting environmental education. The National Environmental Education Act, last authorized in 1990, established the Office of Environmental Education within the Environmental Protection Agency to help increase public understanding of the environment.

The program awards grants for training teachers to develop and teach environmental curricula; supports internships and fellowships to encourage environmental professions; funds national environmental awards; and funds workshops

and conferences to promote environmental education.

In addition, the Act established a nonprofit foundation, the National Environmental Education and Training Foundation to encourage cooperation between the public and private sectors to support environmental education and training.

There are concerns that certain environment curricula favor a specific perspective or agenda and any authorization legislation should ensure that the program has a sound science foundation. I suppose I could say that same paragraph for the hearing today. I understand we did not quite get a balanced panel of witnesses, but I suppose there will be a later opportunity for providing such balance.

I understand and want to consider a variety of opinions as we examine the National Environmental Education Act. I will keep my remarks brief this morning.

Today's witnesses are experts in their field and will provide us with the necessary insights on how we can continue to improve the environmental education program.

I will now turn to the ranking member, Representative Kildee, for any statement he might have.

See Appendix A for the Opening Statement of Chairman Bill Goodling

OPENING STATEMENT OF RANKING MEMBER DALE KILDEE, SUBCOMMITTEE ON EARLY CHILDHOOD, YOUTH AND FAMILIES

Mr. Kildee. I thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am very happy to join the Chairman of the full Committee here this morning, and a very good friend of mine. A friendship that has been tested over 24 years and one that I very much cherish.

Chairman Goodling. It is in cement.

Mr. Kildee. It has been tested in the crucible of sometimes disagreement even, but he is one of my very best friends here in the Congress.

Today's hearing on the National Environment Education Act, this Act that unfortunately has been unauthorized since it expired in 1996, is an important effort to bring further environmental awareness to our schools and communities. Having taught school for ten years, I recall the days when the school curriculum almost never directly or indirectly really touched much on the environment.

I am hopeful that the bipartisan legislation introduced yesterday by Chairman Castle and myself to reauthorize this program is just the beginning of our efforts on this issue, leading to enactment later this Congress.

Environmental education is about healthy people, strong, reliable businesses and economies, and livable communities. Environmental education is critical if we are to

ensure a sound and protected environment for our future generations. Effective environmental education creates an awareness of the relationships between people and places. It encourages an understanding and knowledge of the natural, built environment, and promotes attitudes that value our planet's resources.

Most importantly, it builds skills in our young people for identifying, addressing environmental issues, and motivates action and participation in environmental decision-making.

The John H. Chaffee Environmental Education Act, not only honors a former colleague of ours, but also keeps the spirited mission of the original Environmental Education Act in place.

The bill that Chairman Castle and I introduced yesterday is an excellent first step in extending this program. I look forward to continuing our bipartisan efforts to strengthen our legislation and this program in the remaining days of this Congress.

Thank you again, Mr. Chairman.

See Appendix B for the Opening Statement of the Honorable Dale E. Kildee

Chairman Goodling. I would ask unanimous consent for the hearing record to remain open for 14 days to allow members' statements and other documents referenced during the hearing to be submitted in the official hearing record.

Chairman Goodling. Without objection, so ordered.

I will introduce the witnesses at this time. Mr. John Kasper is the Acting Deputy Associate Administrator for the Office of Communications, Education and Media Relations at the Environmental Protection Agency in Washington D.C. Mr. Kasper is here to give us some insight on the implementation and administration of programs within the National Environmental Education Act.

Mr. Walt Higgins is the Chairman of the Board of Trustees for the National Environmental Education and Training Foundation in Washington D.C. He is also the president and CEO of AGL Resources, Inc. in Atlanta, Georgia. Mr. Higgins has served as a member of the National Environmental Education and Training Foundation since 1996 and as chairman of the board since 1998. He is here today to testify on the operation and activities of the foundation.

Dr. Bora Simmons is a professor of curriculum and instruction at Northern Illinois University in Dekalb, Illinois, where she teaches teacher preparation courses. I hope she tells them to appear professional at all times in the classroom with ties, and with jackets.

She is also the Director of the National Project for Excellence in Environmental Education where she helped develop the environmental education guidelines for educators and is the past president of the North American Association for Environmental Education. Dr. Simmons is here today to provide an educator's perspective on the National Environmental Education Act.

Mr. Richard Anderson is the executive director of the Maryland Environmental Business Alliance in Baltimore, Maryland. He is also a senior partner in an environmental policy and planning consultant service. Mr. Anderson is here today to discuss with us how the National Environmental Education Act has benefited businesses in promoting environmental education.

Do we have the light system working today?

In case you are not familiar with this system, you have five minutes beginning with the green light. When the yellow light is on it signifies the one-minute warning to wrap up your conversation -- that is what they never do in the Senate. When the red light comes on, also what they do not do in the Senate, get ready to stop so that you allow time for questions, although we will not be too serious about that since there are not very many people here today to do the questioning.

Mr. Schaffer, I indicated earlier that we would have to hold a second hearing so that we get a balanced report from all involved. I will first call on Mr. Kasper.

STATEMENT OF MR. JOHN KASPER, ACTING DEPUTY ASSOCIATE ADMINISTRATOR, OFFICE OF COMMUNICATIONS, EDUCATION, AND MEDIA RELATIONS, ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY, WASHINGTON, D.C.

Mr. Kasper. Good morning, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for the opportunity to testify before the Subcommittee on Early Childhood Youth and Families and for initiating a dialogue on the National Environmental Education Act.

I have a written statement and an information packet on the program accomplishments under the Act from 1992 to 1999 that I would like to submit for the record.

I would like to take a few minutes to briefly describe EPA's activities and accomplishments under the National Environmental Education Act and our vision for environmental education.

EPA believes that citizens have a right and a responsibility to participate in the environmental protection decision-making process. We believe that the best way to encourage full citizen participation is to provide them with the knowledge, skills, and abilities they need to make informed choices for themselves and their communities. The ultimate goal of environmental education is to develop an environmentally literate citizenry.

EPA's Office of Environmental Education, the office responsible for implementing the National Environmental Education Act has developed a strategic plan for environmental education that is aligned with the agency's environmental and health protection goals and with the needs and priorities of the environmental education field.

These strategic goals build upon the successful implementation of the Act and are designed to focus resources on the most important issue areas in environmental

education. These goals are:

Supporting state level capacity building to ensure the long-term effectiveness and sustainability of environmental education programs. Linking environmental education with the objectives of education reform to increase the quality and quantity of environmental education in grades K-12. Encouraging research in environmental education that assesses environmental education's effectiveness and environmental protection and education improvement. Improving the quality, access, and coordination of environmental education programs, materials, resources, and information. Finally, communicating and demonstrating the importance and relevance of environmental education to the public and those involved in protecting the environment.

Since 1992, the Office of Environmental Education has successfully implemented programs mandated by the Act and is recognized as one of the leaders in the field of environmental education. These programs have been successful because the staff works directly with meeting education, environmental education, and environmental protection experts to target resources where they are most needed and where they can help students, parents, teachers, and communities learn more about their environment and their responsibility for protecting it for future generations.

I would like to share some of the successes we have had under the Act.

Our teacher-training program working through a consortium of universities and not-for-profit organizations is responsible for providing training opportunities for over 100,000 teachers using the latest Internet technology. Through the teacher training program a set of voluntary national environmental education guidelines has been developed for material development and evaluation, learner outcomes, and teacher preparation. Dr. Bora Simmons who is also testifying today can speak more in depth about these guidelines.

Under the Act, EPA provides funding to support local, state, tribal, and national environmental education initiatives that enhance the public's awareness, knowledge, and skills to make informed and responsible decisions that affect environmental quality.

Our environmental education grants program has been so successful that we have received many more requests for funding than the appropriations can cover. To date we have awarded over 2,000 grants in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, and U.S. Territories. These grants have totaled over $20 million. Projects have ranged from pesticide safety workshops for homeowners in Delaware to linking teachers across Colorado to help develop standard-based environmental education, to workshops for Indiana teachers, to Philadelphia eighth graders and their parents studying the impact of community water usage on the Delaware Estuary.

We also worked with a variety of federal partners through interagency agreements to design and implement innovative environmental education programs.

Program partners have included the Departments of Agriculture, Education, Interior, NASA, the National Science Foundation; we have over 40 collaborative programs with a total contribution of approximately $4.2 million in EPA funds that have leveraged more than $12 million from other federal agencies and their state and local

partners.

We also are supporting environmental education research that assesses the effectiveness of environmental education programs to improve student learning and to reach environmental protection goals.

Shall I continue or shall I stop?

Chairman Goodling. Continue, thank you.

Mr. Kasper. We are also supporting research to assess environmental literacy in this country and the use of education and information programs, economic incentives, and non-economic social science to reach individual households in small and medium-sized industries.

This last project is in conjunction with the National of Academy of Sciences. We have developed a number of programs and activities on the Internet that reach out to the public and other audiences including the Office of Environmental Education's web site which is one of the most popular web sites of the Environmental Protection Agency.

For students we have the President's Environmental Youth Awards program that recognizes young people across the country for local community projects. We also have the National Network for Environmental Management Studies, which encourages students to pursue environmental careers by providing fellowships. The program is designed to provide students with an environmental research or training experience linked directly to their field of graduate or undergraduate study.

To date over 1,100 fellowships have been awarded to students in universities across the country.

We are very proud of what we have accomplished under the National Environmental Education Act. Our funds have benefited individuals, communities, and organizations across the country and have had a major impact on the environmental education community. Our programs are well established and well respected.

Under Section 4 of the National Environmental Education Act, the Office of Environmental Education develops and supports programs, activities, and initiatives designed to improve understanding of the natural and built environment and the relationship between humans and their environment. The only recommendation we would make for improving the Act would be to allow more flexibility in the use of Section 4 funds to allow us to make a make a broader range of awards.

We appreciate the subcommittee's invitation here today and we look forward to continued work with the subcommittee in pursuit of our mutual environmental education goals.

See Appendix C for the Written Statement of Mr. John Kasper

See Appendix D for Information on the Office of Environmental Education's Grant Awards and Profiles

Chairman Goodling. Thank you Mr. Kasper. Mr. Higgins.

STATEMENT OF MR. WALTER M. HIGGINS, CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES, THE NATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING FOUNDATION, WASHINGTON, D.C.

Mr. Higgins. Thank you Mr. Chairman, and thank you for the opportunity to testify before the subcommittee today.

Since 1996, as you mentioned, I have been privileged to serve as a member of the Board of Trustees of the National Environmental Education Training Foundation, or NEETF, as we call it, and since 1998, I have been the Chairman of the Board of Trustees.

In my everyday life, I serve as Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of AGL Resources, which is the parent company of Atlanta Gas Light Company, Chattanooga Gas Company and soon Virginia Natural Gas Company that we are in the process of buying.

In 1990, Congress passed and President Bush signed into law, the National Environmental Education Act. Among other things the Act created NEETF as an independent, nonprofit organization for the purpose of developing public/private partnerships. NEETF promotes balanced, science-based environmental education. It promotes training and it works with the EPA's Office of Education, Office of Environmental Education in the development of education and training programs that focus on non-regulatory approaches to enhancing the environmental knowledge of all Americans.

Over the last decade, NEETF has made great strides in developing public/private partnerships in environmental education and has made many important contributions to the field. The foundation has successfully brought together the business community, nonprofit organizations, and government agencies to focus on innovative, effective, voluntary programs to improve our nation's performance in some critical areas of concern.

These include using the environment to improve academic performance in the nation's K-12 schools; bringing environmental education to doctors and nurses which can lead to higher quality, more cost-effective health-care; improving the environmental performance of the more than five million small businesses that exist in America to help make them both more competitive and more profitable; and in helping Americans understand their roles as individuals in addressing important and often very complex issues surrounding water quality or natural resource stewardship.

NEETF's Institute for Corporate Environmental Mentoring, for example, uses the cumulative environmental expertise of large companies to mentor small businesses, often, for example, in their supply chain or in their customer base, and thereby improve

the small business' environmental performance.

The small businesses, which have been mentored, generally produce cost savings had become more attractive as suppliers either here in America or abroad. Companies that support this program include AT&T, R. R. Donnelly and Sons, Exxon/Mobile, Lockheed Martin, Volvo of North America, Compaq Computer, Pitney Bowes, General Electric and others. The corporate environmental mentoring institute is developing curriculum packages and mentoring networks through the nation's 1,200 community colleges.

One of the significant strengths of the National Environmental Education Act lies in the ability to use federal seed money to leverage private dollars. As part of their mission, NEETF and the EPA's Office of Environmental Education use funds provided through the Act to award environmental education grants to organizations across the United States.

NEETF's grant program must be matched by private companies or other grant-making organizations. This generates significant private investment in environmental education with the added benefit of creating new partnerships and generating new private sector interests and support for environmental education at the local and state level.

NEETF has granted $3 million in grants so far which have generated $4.1 million in private matching funds and will approach $6 million when the current grant projects are completed. The foundation currently requires all grantees to match the grants awarded them all the basis of two non-federal dollars for every federal dollar granted.

Overall, NEETF receives 10 percent of the funds through the National Environmental Education Act, which in fiscal year 1999 amounted to $750,000. Through that $750,000, NEETF was able to generate $12 million in program activities from those funds; that is $15 for every appropriated dollar. That is a payback of which we are justifiably proud, we think.

The National Environmental Education Act is a powerful tool for developing balanced, age-appropriate, environmental education and training that's based on sound science. It has the added benefit of generating private investment in and interest in environmental learning.

On behalf of myself, the members of the Board of Trustees of NEETF and my many colleagues in the business community who believe that environmental learning will play an increasingly large role in improving the nation's environmental and economic performance, I urge the committee and the subcommittee to favorably consider reauthorization of the National Environmental Education Act.

Thank you for allowing me to testify here today.

Chairman Goodling. Thank you.

See Appendix E for the Written Statement of Mr. Walter Higgins

Chairman Goodling. Dr. Simmons, I would indicate, that for 17 years as a school administrator, I employed teachers. After I was elected to Congress and went back to visit them, I had to tell many of them that I dressed and look better going to the barn in the morning and the evening to do the feeding than they do in the classroom. So that is why I am suggesting, since you are preparing them, you indicate that appearance is important.

Dr. Simmons.

STATEMENT OF DR. BORA SIMMONS, PROFESSOR OF CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION, NORTHERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY, DEKALB, ILLINOIS

Dr. Simmons. I hope the graduates of Northern Illinois University are professionals.

Chairman Goodling. I do not know that I have employed any of them.

Dr. Simmons. Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to come before you today and present my views to the members of the Early Childhood Youth and Families Subcommittee. I am pleased to be here to support reauthorization of the National Environmental Education Act. For close to 30 years environmental education has been my professional focus in both the traditional classroom as well as non-formal settings, such as nature centers and after school programs.

At Northern Illinois University I work with undergraduate students preparing to teach in elementary schools, with in-service elementary and secondary teachers, and with graduate degree candidates focusing on environmental education.

For eight years it was my privilege to serve as a member of the board of directors of the North American Association for Environmental Education, the primary professional association for environmental educators. I served as president of NAAEE in 1996.

The National Environmental Education Act has been of critical importance in the ongoing professionalization of the field of environmental education. The Act has made it possible to design, disseminate, and promote environmental education curriculum standards and materials that are fair and accurate, age-appropriate, and based on sound science. With funds provided through the Act, professional training is provided to more than 100,000 teachers each year.

In 1996, with funds from Section 5 of the National Environmental Education Act, and as part of the Environmental Education and Training Partnership, NAAEE asked me to lead the process of developing environmental education guidelines. These guidelines were developed with the input of more than 3,000 members of state, local, and national organizations, including the National Science Teacher's Association, the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, the National Council for Social Studies, and the American Association for the Advancement of Science.

The guidelines allow individual school districts, schools, and teachers to gauge the appropriateness of the content, materials, and presentation of their environmental education programs. The guidelines provide teachers with professional benchmarks for high-quality environmental education instruction and establish criteria for fairness, accuracy, depth, skills building, instructional soundness, and usability.

The guidelines for excellence reflect a widely shared consensus that environmental education programs must fully describe environmental problems, reflect the diversity of perspectives on them and foster awareness of the natural and built environment.

Using the guidelines, educators promote civic responsibility and encourage individual thinking and problem solving. My first-hand experience as an environmental educator as well as the growing body of rigorous research suggests that students benefit directly from quality environmental education.

Environmental education makes a difference in classrooms because it actively engages students in learning. Environmental education encourages students to make discoveries about the world around them. Students absorbed in the subject matter learned better and tend to stay enthusiastically on task.

Parents support environmental education. According to a 1998 survey conducted by NEETF and Roper Starch Worldwide, 96 percent of parents want environmental education in their children's classrooms. Environmental education is valuable to students because it teaches them how to think, not what to think. It provides the foundation for decision-making and creative problem solving that individuals need throughout adolescence, young adulthood, middle age, and beyond. These skills and the ability to work in teams are exactly what the business community tells us they critically need in the American workforce.

Although we cannot fully predict what social, economic, or global issues today's children will face when they are adults, we do know that environmental education will provide the necessary foundation to prepare them for the world of work.

Thank you for your consideration of reauthorization of the National Environmental Education Act. I know I speak for literally thousands of teachers across America in asking you to take favorable action on the measure before you.

Chairman Goodling. Thank you.

See Appendix F for the Written Statement of Dr. Bora Simmons

Chairman Goodling. Mr. Anderson.

STATEMENT OF MR. RICHARD ANDERSON, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, MARYLAND ENVIRONMENTAL BUSINESS ALLIANCE, BALTIMORE, MARYLAND

Mr. Anderson. Good morning Mr. Chairman and members of the committee. I want to thank you for the opportunity to testify today before the subcommittee.

As Executive Director of the Maryland Environmental Business Alliance I annually work with over 460 companies in Maryland and in the Mid-Atlantic region that provide environmental consulting, technology development, and contractual services to the regulated community.

Our membership clearly demonstrates that work in improving environmental performance stimulates commercial activity, creates market demand for specialized expertise and technology, and particularly focuses on providing these services to small and local businesses.

More than five million small businesses are in America, they constitute the nation's fastest growing economic sector. Eighty percent of all businesses in America today have fewer than 10 employees with 97 percent having fewer than 500 employees.

According to the Maryland Small Business Administration, approximately 97 percent of Maryland's 126,000 businesses operating in 1998 were small businesses considered having 500 or fewer employees. Maryland's environmental business sector includes everything from companies that provide waste management to wastewater treatment facilities, right now ranks as the seventh largest contributor to Maryland's tax income based on recent information from the Maryland Department of Business and Economic Development.

The wave of small business growth, however, has missed a number of the small businesses, a number of the large businesses that experienced support have now decided to make additional services available. Small businesses need to learn how work in the environment can provide commercial and economic benefits that go beyond regulatory compliance.

The National Environmental Education Training Foundation through the Institute for Corporate Environmental Mentoring is working on an environmental education program that will deliver to small business owners throughout the country and their employees through a network of 1,200 community colleges important environmental education training. These colleges will provide an important link to accessibility; they will provide affordable environmental learning that leads to improved environmental performances, particularly for small businesses. They will be able to reduce their operating costs, improve efficiency, and increase their ability to be compliant.

Large businesses have mastered these techniques in order to thrive and compete. Increasingly, they are providing services and are asking their small vendors in their supply chains to become equally responsive in their environmental performance.

The National Environmental Education Act supports this effort and will provide environmental education and training to small businesses to improve their business

operations, their environmental performance, with the entire time keeping their mind on bottom-line performance. The reauthorization of the National Environmental Education Act would support an expanded network of colleges and courses that would develop adult education learning opportunities in environmental education.

The Maryland Environmental Business Alliance supports the efforts of the National Environmental Education Training Foundation and particularly the Institute for Corporate Environmental Mentoring as they expand environmental education and training opportunities directed to small businesses. This training will also increase the number of colleges able to participate in the program and will build an environmental support network for small businesses through the small business development centers located throughout United States.

The National Environmental Education Act calls for the development of an environmentally conscious and responsible public. It also calls for the development of a well-trained and environmentally literate workforce, a very important point. Environmental education provides locally to business owners a real opportunity for low-cost methods for training, for mentorship, an approach for assisting them to become more environmentally responsive.

NEETF's Institute for Corporate Environmental Mentoring is a fine example of how this legislation can empower small businesses and to add economic growth through environmental education.

Through the National Environmental Education Act I recommend your support for these initiatives. On behalf of Maryland's Environmental Business Alliance I urge the committee to favorably consider the reauthorization of the Act.

I want to thank you on behalf of the Maryland Environmental Business Alliance for the opportunity to share my ideas with the committee today.

See Appendix G for the Written Statement of Mr. Richard Anderson

Chairman Goodling. I thank all of you for your testimony here today. We try to operate up here on the same kind of system; so if you will be as brief as you can with your responses it will help.

I am sure you are not surprised when the federal government mentions the word "curricula" many Americans become very suspicious. I would ask all of you to respond to a comment I made in the opening statement where I said there are concerns that certain environmental curricula favor a specific perspective or agenda and any authorization legislation should ensure that the program has a sound science foundation.

Please, whoever would like to be first to respond?

Mr. Kasper. Mr. Chairman I will go first, if I may. I would like to say that EPA does not fund environmental advocacy. We have gone to great lengths in this program to fund only well balanced and scientifically based education programs. We are supporting the development of guidelines and emphasizing the importance of fairness and accuracy and sound educational theory. Our education grant and teacher training solicitation notices

explicitly state that EPA does not fund advocacy or programs that advance only one point of view.

We also have a two-tiered review process for these applications in which part of the evaluation process is to ensure that we have a balanced presentation of environmental issues and that there is no attempt to promote any advocacy position. Also for grants over $100,000 the recipients must sign a form that prohibits them from using any of the grant money for lobbying.

Chairman Goodling. Mr. Kasper who told you what question I was going to ask?

Mr. Kasper. I thought of it myself.

Chairman Goodling. Mr. Higgins?

Mr. Higgins. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Two things: first, NEETF in its grant-making activities carefully scrutinizes the entire spectrum of what is proposed by a requester for a grant to determine exactly what it is the requester wants to do with the money and makes very sure that what the requester proposes to do will be based on fact, science facts, and the truth of what is going on in the program that they propose. We carefully sniff out where proposals seek or seem to be seeking to promote a particular point of view.

Secondly, I think our fundamental point of view as business people as members of the Board of Trustees is that if there is insufficient information or information not based on science you're more likely to have advocacy or a point of view prevail. But the more we can get more good information in the hands of people, whether they are students or professionals, the more likely they are to make a decision that any of us would make faced with full information. So we work very hard to try to get more information, more complete information, more accurate information -- science-based information into the hands of students, leaders, and decision-makers so they can make good decisions.

Dr. Simmons. I would just like to add a little bit that the two previous speakers spoke to the process of how grants are awarded and I think that there are checks and balances within those processes that help make sure that the types of materials that are being developed under these funds are balanced and are accurate and scientifically sound.

Another piece of information is that we have through this particular piece of legislation developed a set of guidelines to help those who are developing materials or evaluating materials to be able to decide whether or not they are factually accurate, whether they are balanced, whether they are fair, scientifically sound, whether they are instructionally sound. So that I think that we have started to build a whole package of professionalization of the field that is particularly important.

Another important piece of information is to think about how education in the United States is decentralized and that the decisions to make or to use particular pieces of curriculum or textbooks, is made at the local level. That what we are hoping to do is to provide funding for the development of quality materials that then can be available but that the local individuals are going to be able to make those decisions based on guidelines of fairness, accuracy, and sound science.

Mr. Anderson. Let me speak for a moment on the corporate environmental mentoring program. It is a program in which companies are able to get together and share expertise and when they share the expertise of what works in improving environmental performance, it is expertise that is actually proven in the field, that we can identify what environmental impact improvement there was and what economic improvement there was.

From what I know about the course work that is being put together, that will be offered through the community colleges; what we are doing is taking these shared experiences, real world experiences, real outcomes from businesses having actually done the work and putting them into the course work. None of the program is based on theory; it is based on actual application and proven performance. I think that is what is really important about the kind of training that is being offered.

Chairman Goodling. This polluted water does flow up to Pennsylvania. Congressman Gilchrest does not seem to understand that.

Mr. Kildee. I thank you Mr. Chairman. I do appreciate the panel. I think it is very balanced. I think individually they have balanced things very well.

Let me say this, both as a teacher and as a lawmaker now for 36 years, I have tried to balance things myself with what I call my three E's -- energy, the environment, and the economy, that is kind of my tripod and the Sierra Club and the League of Conservation Board generally gives me a high rating and yet I am able to work with the auto industry and various other industries in the country, the power industry.

Do you feel that in these environmental programs that there is a thought of this mantra that the three E's may be. Mr. Higgins if you could?

Mr. Higgins. I think not explicitly, Congressman, but implicitly people who operate businesses or institutions in this country are always balancing those things. You have more or less named the three E's that we in our own company use to guide many of our decisions, energy, environment, economic development; education would be my third E instead of energy because we are in the energy business. However, we believe deeply that environmental performance which stems from environmental understanding, as a company will make us a better company, more competitive and more likely to succeed.

That is the essence of the business approach, which the corporate institute for environmental mentoring takes. It is looking at trying to find enough information to make the right choices between the three E's. So I wholeheartedly agree.

Mr. Kildee. Mr. Anderson?

Mr. Anderson. Well, I am glad that we agree on one thing. My whole consulting practice focuses on those three areas, but let me go back to the mentoring program.

Initially it focused just on the environmental aspects, but over the last two years at the insistence of a number of participating partners, it became very clear that the energy and economic portions of that equation were paramount and needed to be added to the program. So I feel that the new program that is underway that is being offered and being field tested really focuses on those three elements along with material, recycled material

responsibility and raw material responsibility as a part of that whole economic and environmental effort.

Mr. Kildee. Thank you. One of the biggest concerns of the subcommittee and the full committee chaired by Mr. Goodling is that federal education programs should be aimed at increasing academic achievement. Dr. Simmons you mentioned that that can play a role; would you give us some specific examples of how environmental education does impact upon academic achievement?

Dr. Simmons. I would be more than happy to. In your packets you will be receiving a new publication from NEETF that is called "*Environment-Based Education*", a report on its usefulness in creating high-performing schools and students. What we found through the case studies that are reported in this particular document as well as a number of other research reports is that when environmental education is infused throughout the curriculum and plays a major part in the curriculum that reading scores specifically are improved. Sometimes those scores are improved spectacularly.

As an example, in one school in Milwaukee the students who were involved in an environmental education program, all of them passed the Wisconsin reading comprehension test as compared to only 25 percent of the total Milwaukee public school students. Math scores have also been improved through environmental education. We found that students tend to perform better in science and social studies and some evidence that has come out of the TIMS report, the Third International Math and Science report; that seems to support that position.

Students develop the ability to make connections through environmental education. So they are being taught within a context instead of fact-by-fact. So, therefore, they are able to transfer that knowledge from one discipline to another.

One of the parts of environmental education because it is so hands-on, because it is teaching about the real world and helping them to discover the real world they learn to do science rather than just learning about science.

One of the other just interesting pieces of research is that it seems that where environmental education is incorporated within the curriculum classroom discipline problems seem to decline. One of the other senses is that every child, not just the bright children, seem to thrive within environmental education and it helps all children learn better.

Mr. Kildee. Thank you very much. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman Goodling. I was going to mention, Mr. Higgins, that I wish I had stock in all of those companies you mentioned, but I was a public school educator for 22 years so I do not have any stock in anything. Mr. Schaffer.

Mr. Schaffer. Thank you Mr. Chairman. I have a couple of questions. Let me find all of my notes here. Mr. Kasper, in your testimony one of the things you mentioned is that EPA's Office of Environmental Education (OEE) is responsible for implementation of the National Environmental Education Act. OEE, working directly with the environmental education community has developed, and here is the language I am most concerned about, "a strategic vision for environmental education that is aligned with the agency's

environmental health protection goals."

I guess my concern is about the notion of a federal agency that is a political organization, established by the Congress and directed under the political directives of the administration, administers this environmental program. This education program in a way that is aligned with the environmental and health protection goals of the agency effectively creating a kind of political filter of sorts at the agency's direction. The directives and policy objectives are really the predicate for the implementation of the education program.

Would you care to comment on that? How should we view this as anything other than a political litmus test of sorts?

Mr. Kasper. I would say first, Mr. Schaffer, I would disagree that the EPA is a political organization; it is an independent regulatory agency.

Mr. Schaffer. EPA in your opinion is not a political organization? Did I hear you correctly?

Mr. Kasper. EPA has political appointees in high positions but the agency itself is an independent regulatory agency.

Mr. Schaffer. Well, just to be clear, just to restate it as clearly as we can, do you agree with the statement that the EPA is not a political organization?

Mr. Kasper. I would disagree with that, yes.

Mr. Schaffer. So now you disagree?

Mr. Kasper. I would disagree that, well, no...

Mr. Schaffer. So the EPA is a political organization?

Mr. Kasper. Maybe I am misunderstanding you.

Mr. Schaffer. All right. Just tell me, yes or no, is the EPA a political organization?

Mr. Kasper. No

Mr. Schaffer. It is not in your opinion.

Mr. Kasper. No.

Mr. Schaffer. Very well. Please continue. I am interested.

Mr. Kasper. What I was going to say was, being an independent regulatory agency we have probably one of the most extensive charges of any regulatory agency. We have over 12 major statutes we administer. What we mean by bringing environmental education in line with the agency's environmental and health protection goal is those 12 statutes; ranging anywhere from clean water to hazardous waste to pesticides and it is a huge

undertaking.

Mr. Schaffer. I was curious about your statement that the EPA does not fund advocacy. I would like to ask you more specifically about the national environmental education advancement project at the University of Wisconsin at Stevens Point; are you familiar with that program?

Mr. Kasper. Not specifically, no.

Mr. Schaffer. Okay. Well, it is funded with EPA money through this program and it exists to develop and train political coalitions in the state. Does the EPA fund this program? Are you aware of whether or not the EPA funds this program?

Mr. Kasper. I would have to get the details on that, Mr. Schaffer, but we do not fund political advocacy.

Mr. Schaffer. Do you fund the national environmental education advancement project at the University of Wisconsin?

Dr. Simmons. May I jump in here?

Mr. Schaffer. I am interested in your answer in a minute. First, I would like to see if you, Mr. Kasper, are aware of whether your agency funds the national environmental education advancement project at the University of Wisconsin?

Mr. Kasper. We do fund that, Mr. Schaffer.

Mr. Schaffer. You do. Okay. I am sorry, Dr. Simmons, go ahead.

Dr. Simmons. I was just going to mention that the national environmental education advancement project that its purpose is to help build organizations at the state and local level for...

Mr. Schaffer. Do any of those organizations lobby the legislature in Wisconsin?

Dr. Simmons. I do not know that specifically.

Mr. Schaffer. I do; they do. They do lobby the legislature in Wisconsin.

Dr. Simmons. But what I do know is that these organizations are the associations of environmental education at the state level. So in my state of Illinois we have an Environmental Education Association of Illinois that is made up of professional environmental educators.

Mr. Schaffer. Is it funded through this program as well?

Dr. Simmons. In that particular organization, there is some small funding.

Mr. Schaffer. Do you lobby the legislature in Illinois?

Dr. Simmons. I do not believe that we do.

Mr. Schaffer. You do not believe...

Dr. Simmons. What I wanted to make as a point, was that that whole project is not geared towards lobbying. What it is geared towards is developing the skills within associations so that they can build better boards and be more effective associations for educators so that they can educate educators about environmental education and the differences between environmental education and environmental advocacy; and that that has been the thrust of the various clinics, that has been the thrust of a number of the different programs.

One of the programs in Illinois that I am particularly familiar with is a program of trying to educate non-formal environmental educators, people who teach at zoos and museums and at aquaria, nature centers, about education, about education reform, and about how to become good quality environmental educators.

Chairman Castle. I thank you Mr. Schaffer. Ms. Woolsey.

Ms. Woolsey. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Well, I am going to just follow on this because one of my, I mean I support this program just totally. I am a supporter. We have got projects in my district in the Sixth Congressional District, but I have a concern and my concern is, isn't one of the goals of the program to encourage teachers and educators and encourage students to be interested in the environment and in science; and, of course, that is one of the goals. I'm worried that when we get all wrapped around the politics of what is proven science, what is good science, what is scientifically sound, that we are closing off a lot of what the students need to be doing which is questioning and getting out of the box and pushing the envelope. Global warming would be an example.

I mean, if we cannot talk about global warming in these programs and work on what are the questions and what are the concerns; what are we giving these kids? I mean they are not going to be interested in some formula that says, you know, we cannot be political. We cannot talk about anything except for some little boxed agenda.

So respond to that for me. Because I know we are doing the things in spite of this, but see I would not mind if we did not throw some wacky ideas in there that are disproved by these students and by these instructors because that gets their minds going. So talk about it. We will start with you, Dr. Simmons.

Dr. Simmons. Thank you. I can certainly speak to this as an educator that not only for environmental education but for all of education that when we do teach about issues that it is extremely important that we help the students begin to understand at an age-appropriate level the multi-sides of the issues so that were are not talking about pro we are not talking about con, we are not only teaching to one side or another; we are helping those students explore those issues fully, gain the scientific information that is available, but also gain the information that we have about their own community, about the economics that are involved, help them to make good decisions, help them understand the business community, help them understand what the resources are, help them to gather that information and ask good questions.

That is probably one of the foundations of environmental education is that we want them to become good critical thinkers, good problem solvers and creative thinkers so that it is not the facts in particular that we want them to learn it is being able to think about the information that they are able to gather and then to make good solid decisions based on that information.

Ms. Woolsey. Mr. Kasper, would you like to respond to that about how we are going to get young people to come to good solid, healthy conclusions if we only give them one piece of the information?

Mr. Kasper. From EPA's perspective I do not think we have tried to give just one piece of information.

Ms. Woolsey. No, I know you have not. I am aware of that.

Mr. Kasper. We have tried to achieve what Dr. Simmons was just discussing and the program wants children to become problem solvers; it wants them to have inquisitive minds.

Ms. Woolsey. So, can you do that if you only tell them they cannot talk about something that we would consider some parts of our Congress would consider scientifically not sound?

I mean, my fear is that we keep saying we want good science. We get good science, if we do not like to results of that good science, we say, whoops, we want other good science.

Mr. Kasper. Well, I am not a scientist, but from having worked at EPA for a while I know that scientific issues are not easy ones, and there are scientists on both sides of all these issues and most of them are developing issues and the environmental arena is a very young area and we have come a long way in 30 years both in technology and in the way we think about these.

I think that is what we want to instill in the children through these projects that we need to be open minded, we need inquire about these issues, and we need to be able to do some critical problem solving about them.

Ms. Woolsey. Anybody else want to respond? Mr. Higgins?

Mr. Higgins. I would only add from NEETF's point of view that NEETF takes care to make sure that it is not stimulating or granting money to advocacy organizations or groups specifically for the purpose of advocacy, but NEETF acknowledges that in the course of teaching students or health-care professionals or business leaders about the environment that there is going to a debate about what the truth is and what the science is, and our goal is to get as much information as possible in the hands of people so they can make good decisions.

Ms. Woolsey. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman Castle. Thank you, Ms. Woolsey.

Mr. DeMint.

Mr. DeMint. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Just for a perspective and maybe some reassurances from the panel. I am frustrated as I am sure you are that folks that look at environmental issues seem to be on one side or the other, it is environment at any cost, or it is business at any cost to the environment and there seldom seems to be very much common sense in how to merge to two together.

Frankly, I am concerned about EPA being involved with teaching. I know in my own district they seem to have difficulty balancing protection of the environment with other quality of life issues such as jobs and productivity. The EPA is trying to cut off new road money for our area when that is exactly what we need to spread out the congestion so that we will not have such bad air quality in one part of our district.

Again another concern is, the students that I have met both in high school and in college that seem to be getting some information about the environment, seem to be getting the information that our environmental problems are because of greedy businesses and that profits are bad and seem to come away with a total misunderstanding of what America is all about and free enterprise. So I am not convinced that the EPA and some of you who have talked today can balance a knowledge of the environment with other quality of life issues; and specifically I would just like some reassurance that maybe you can and that you have some ideas along those lines.

Another question is why aren't environmental issues worked into the total science curriculum? Why are we setting up something differently when if this is science, if this is our environment, why is this not a part of the basic curriculum? Again, I do not understand this. Why can it not be worked into the curriculum?

I have two questions and I invite any of you to give me some response or reassurance.

Dr. Simmons. I will start with the second question first.

Mr. DeMint. Okay.

Dr. Simmons. Environmental education most definitely belongs in science -- there is no question about that. But in order to solve environmental issues, in order to think about the environment as a whole you also need to understand economics, you also need to understand culture, you also need to understand how society works, and we need to understand how decisions are made at the individual level up through the community level. So our sense is that environmental education is best infused throughout the curriculum so that it is built upon a science base but also that in making those sorts of investigations of the environment, you are using math skills, you are using English, language arts and other communication skills; that you are developing your knowledge and understanding of social sciences and civics.

It is not just a purview of science although that certainly is to the heart of it, and good sound science is extremely important. It is also important that we do include an understanding of economics and some of the other disciplines in being able to truly understand the environment.

Mr. DeMint. I will maybe redirect part of my question and I appreciate a response from Mr. Kasper. Some of the businesses in my district are very positive towards the EPA they think the EPA has certainly made a contribution towards facilitating improvements focusing on problems but there is a real concern in many areas that you do not seem to recognize the point of diminishing returns. That we are trying to get dirt clean enough to eat, when on the other side we have not solved some basic problems.

And if this is a philosophy that is be taken to our schools, again, I have a concern that there is not a common sense approach that balances a lot issues. So, again, I am looking for reassurance more than a specific answer to a question if you have it.

Mr. Kasper. I guess the best way I could respond is to say that EPA does not teach in the classrooms. We fund the program to get the federal money out to the state and local school systems, community organizations that can do the projects and advance the goals of the program overall. I think the important thing about the federal program and the National Environmental Education Act is that it helps ensure against just what you are talking about and tries to make certain that environmental education gives a balance and a view based on good science and good reasoning.

Mr. DeMint. But if you are not involved with the teaching, how to these ideas work their way into the curriculum? Who is responsible for developing the curriculum and who should be in your mind?

Mr. Kasper. The local school system and the local educators.

Mr. DeMint. I yield back, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Castle. Thank you, Mr. DeMint.

Mr. Payne.

Mr. Payne. Thank you very much and I am glad that it is left up to the local school systems, because I hear a lot from the other side about we need to have local people do what they think locally is the right thing to do. So I am glad to hear that you allow the local school people to determine what should be taught.

I just have a few questions. First of all, I think that certainly Mr. Castle made several good changes consolidating several of the awards, naming the program after the late Senator Chaffee, and so forth. I just have a question regarding this scientifically sound which I think even when the gentleman who just spoke said that we need to get a balance between the environment and the business; how do you then find new ground if you prohibit anything that is not considered environmentally scientifically sound?

The second thing is, I am kind of lost here, of course my opponent says that I am usually lost; but, I am lost here because I hear there are certain principles that are Kyoto and we studied them. We found out that carbon dioxide, CO2, certainly, is something that destroys the environment. We know that CFO's, chlorofluorocarbons certainly pollute and endanger and damage. We know that particulates which is newly looked at, they are particles that come from coal-burning energy plants create these particulates which diffuse through semi-permeable membranes, sort of like osmosis and can infuse

into a young child's body.

Now, my friends on the other side say, well, why should the EPA, the Environment Protection Agency, have to be sure that they do not get involved in advocacy. It has been clear they do not, but you would expect the Department of Health to talk about how you stay healthy in the country and talk about how to prevent how to have checkups to prevent cancer. For people to say that the EPA should make sure that it does not advocate or does not talk about the fact that the air should be clean; that certain kinds of things pollute the water. They continue to push the WTO, how to most favored nation's status, call it normal trade relations that makes it all right. How do you push commerce? So why should the EPA have to be on this tight wire to make sure that we do not offend any of our colleagues who feel that this question about the environment goes too far?

I would like, and perhaps in my remaining minute or so ask a question; what is scientifically sound?

I mean, the breakthrough in genetics the other day where these two top genetics, or whatever you call them -- people that study genetics -- came together and they had this big breakthrough where Blair was in Britain talking about it, and President Clinton here. I am sure when those guys started dropping those like drops in these little things it was not scientifically sound. Therefore, we would not have had any breakthrough in genetics if everything had to be funded on scientifically sound evidence.

So I would just ask a question as my time sets to expire, what is scientifically sound, and, therefore, what must the EPA not talk about? Maybe if the panel could respond.

Mr. Kasper. I would say that in terms of what is scientifically sound, those are issues basically I think that you get some consensus in the scientific community that there needs to be investigation, there needs to be further research. At EPA overall there is great emphasis on the scientific process. We have a Scientific Advisory Board.

I think the point that I would like to make in response to your question, Mr. Payne, is that we are emphasizing science, we are emphasizing problem solving so that we can get away from the idea that these are simple issues with simple answers; they are not. As Mr. Kildee was saying, we were talking about the three E's, and even though EPA does not have a lot to do with energy, I learned a long time ago at EPA that pollution is wasted energy.

So they are very complex issues, they are very involved and we want them to be treated that way in the environmental education program and at the agency as a whole.

Mr. Payne. Mr. Higgins, since you are the chair and you are the volunteer and you put that in your comments, what does, in your opinion, "scientifically sound" mean to you?

Mr. Higgins. Congressman, we think that scientifically sound means that a person has enough information as an individual, as a business person, as a health care professional, that they can make an informed decision about what to do either in their personal actions or if you are trying to diagnose why somebody is ill, what it is that might be causing them to be ill. What we do not do is try to create organizations that go and try to influence

some body of Congress or some federal regulatory agency to do something or take a particular action, but rather we help try to help people understand how to make good decisions on their own behalf.

For example, is it okay to pour oil down the drain in the sewer in front of your house when you have changed the oil in your car? Well, of course, it is not okay. We all know that but why is it not it okay? Because it pollutes our rivers and streams.

Most Americans still think, unfortunately, and we do a survey every year, that most pollution comes from factories or from municipal waste outfall. That is not true at all. Most pollution comes from automobiles dropping oil on the road, or people pouring oil down the drains in their streets. We want to teach people what it is that is causing a problem so they can change their behavior and do better.

Chairman Castle. Thank you, Mr. Payne.

Mr. Petri.

Mr. Petri. Thank you. It is fascinating now and I can remember as a student myself learning things that we now decided were not necessarily so. We were going to run out of oil in seven years and that was quite a long time ago, and we still have oil. We were taught to run around and spray oil everywhere because polio was a big worry and we wanted to cover every little pool of water or anything with a film of oil to prevent mosquitoes from breeding and carrying the polio virus. So there are trade-offs and Smokey the Bear was the big thing.

Now, we are re-examining the question of burning and how to do that in a responsible way. In any event, my question is, this is not the only effort to help sensitize people and educate people or young people about the environment. There have been efforts for generations. I grew up with the Arbor Day Foundation I think comes out of Nebraska; we would go out and plant a tree. My Senator from Wisconsin has Earth Day. Is this one more duplicative effort? Do you work with all these organizations? How does this fit into our general society's concern to responsibly be stewards of Mother Earth as they say?

Mr. Higgins. Congressman, I could just respond on NEETF's part and I attempted to say this in my remarks and that is that NEETF partners with businesses with not-for-profit organizations such as other foundations to create or foster programs that raise awareness of Americans about what the effect of various activities and behaviors is on the environment.

So one thing that we do, we are the national sponsor of National Public Lands Day which we do jointly with the Toyota Motor Company. We attempt to get Americans to appreciate and to actually go out and do work on public lands and some millions of dollars each year of volunteer time and labor are invested in cleaning up and making more suitable our public lands that are available for public access. So there is a partnership. This is one of the things that we do -- we work with other agencies, other organizations that try to foster other programs and we do unique things.

So I would say it is not at all duplicative. We have a niche that we have found that creates a unique program like National Public Lands Day or the corporate institute

for environmental mentoring, or health care professional initiative to increase the amount of understanding and education that doctors and nurses get in their training on how to diagnose and understand environmentally caused diseases. Those are not things that are going on anywhere else. So our programs are unique in that regard.

Mr. Petri. In our area, of course, it is a mixed industrial and agricultural area and the agricultural committee works very closely with the business community and the government community to attempt to increase public awareness particularly on the part of young people about how agriculture really works.

In fact, most of ours are family farms and there is nobody more concerned about trying to be responsible with the environment than these people on their land. Yet so many young people think that food comes from a store. They do not realize the trade-offs in trying, for example, do engineering with plants so you do not have to use pesticides. They get nervous about interfering with plant genetics and yet if you can fix the plant so that it can repel an insect instead of having to use chemicals that is a plus.

Do you get into things like this at all? I mean, we have animal rights, they are terrorizing our farmers, they somehow think that they are abusing the animals and that food comes from, I guess it just sort-of comes naturally without anyone attempting to produce it.

Mr. Higgins. Congressman, we have at NEETF very limited interaction with environmental matters. NEETF attempts to do with environmental matters what you are describing as a coalition of business and agricultural interests attempt to do, if I understand you correctly, about what is farming exactly and how does it work and what are the trade-offs that are made. What NEETF tries to do is help people have enough information to make good decisions in the various things that they do in life -- whether they are students or business people or health care professionals -- so that they can understand the effect of what they do and make a decision that is in the best interest of their business of the environment. Our interaction with agriculture is very, very limited if it even exists all. Other then the occasional grant that may have an agricultural component to it; but that is very limited.

Dr. Simmons. I just wanted to address two pieces of your question. The first was that under Section 5 of the Act there has been formed something called "the Environmental Education and Training Partnership"(ETAP) and a whole part of what we have been trying to accomplish with ETAP is to actually have synergy amongst the 11 different partners in that group so that we are not duplicating one another's efforts. So that we can actually make sure that we coordinate with one another, that we can build off of one another's work, and that we can reach as many people as possible with good quality balanced materials.

The other piece is that as much as environmental organization, advocacy organizations, have their place in society, what we are talking about here with the Act are education organizations. I consider myself an educator and our purpose is to make sure that good quality education gets into the classroom and that that is what we are really trying to promote.

Chairman Castle. Thank you, Mr. Petri.

Ms. Mink.

Mrs. Mink. Thank you very much. This is an issue of enormous consequences and I appreciate the questions that have been raised on both sides of this issue.

I think that some of the questions have to go to where this environmental educational program is placed. As I understand the initiating legislation years ago placed it in EPA, from the Department of Education, and that the current proposal keeps it in the Environmental Protection Agency, is this correct?

Dr. Simmons. Yes.

Mrs. Mink. I think that is what has kind of stimulated the necessity for restricting the impact of this very important program with these troublesome words like "sound scientific principles" and "scientifically based education balanced" and "scientifically based education" which I find very troubling.

I guess my question comes from a fundamental belief that when we are dealing with education in the elementary and secondary age group that we ought to try to channel these various kinds of educational stimuli through allocations and appropriations in the Elementary and Secondary Education Act rather than selecting out an agency that has some very strong requirements with respect to the enforcement of our environmental laws.

So my question to the panel is, would we not be better off to get away from these restrictions that are propounded because of the location of this program in EPA and get it out of the EPA totally? I understand why it was put there because it was a new, fresh idea and it seemed logical. But now it has advanced to a stage where we can be liberated from the structure and put it where it belongs in the ESEA; may I have your comments?

Mr. Higgins. Congresswoman Mink, I will start only by saying that NEETF does not have a policy or a position on where it should be housed in the federal government. It was at one time, as best we understand it, that whatever environmental education program existed was administered by the U.S. Department of Education, perhaps in the '70s and '80s, but it languished. President Bush and the EPA Administrator Riley decided that there was a need for environmental education and asked the Congress to put environmental education together and it was proposed and passed by the Congress and housed in the EPA in 1990 and has been there ever since.

Mr. Kasper. I would like to add to that. The program is at EPA, but...

Mrs. Mink. I am sorry but I cannot hear you.

Mr. Kasper. I am sorry. Even though the program is at EPA, we will continue to work with the Department of Education to ensure that environmental education is environmentally accurate and educationally appropriate.

Mrs. Mink. But that is not my point. My point is in follow-up to Ms. Woolsey's question is that we ought not to be constricting our approach towards environmental education by constantly having to determine whether something is scientifically balanced, or scientifically sound, or scientifically proven, those kinds of requirements are

necessary when you are reaching decision-making responsibilities which it is truly the job of the EPA.

But in education the purpose of it is to stimulate inquiry. Secondly, to make sure that the teachers throughout the system have an awareness of the educational aspects of environment that may be in their selected area of teaching that it is not a course with a curriculum but something that permeates throughout the experience of a person and that the extent to which we can get the children to understand this overall perspective. Whether you can pinpoint a scientifically sound principle upon which you are suggesting an inquiry, it seems to me is highly restrictive.

I can recall some four or five years ago when I took the point of view and that the government was totally wrong in conducting these sonar experiments in the deep ocean on the Pacific Coast, and around my state, and that it would have, in my view, injurious impact on the very whales that we had set aside certain areas of the ocean as special habitat for these endangered species. And here we were putting out all these devices and testing out defense equipment with total disregard for the whales.

I did not come to my conclusion in that case where I advocated against it with scientifically sound data. As a matter-of-fact when we had hearings on these issues the scientists took issue with me and said, "Oh you are all wet"; pun excluded.

Mrs. Mink. Thank you for laughing. But in any event in the course of time these pseudo-scientists, like myself, who had an ear to the impacts on the environment had proven to be correct and they have now canceled the tests on the East Coast and in the Caribbean and hopefully they will have similar wisdom and cancel the ones in the Pacific.

So I am very fearful of confining what we call legitimate educational and environmental education to those matters only that are scientifically based and that is really my quarrel with why we have to do this. I think it is because it is placed in EPA and people have this sort of feeling that EPA is a highly controversial entity and it has to take positions, that is its duty; and if we are going to launch in EPA the responsibility to conduct environmental education to put all this onus of scientifically based education that we are really departing from what I thought was really a terrific idea of broadening the children's appreciation of where they live, how they live, and what the future might be like because of what we do to our environment today.

Thank you Mr. Chairman.

Chairman Castle. Thank you, Mrs. Mink.

Mr. Hilleary.

Mr. Hilleary. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, I am going to yield the rest of my time in a second to another colleague, but I just want to make a brief statement.

Of all the correspondence that I receive, the ones I enjoy the most are from young children in the classroom. They have been talking about the environment or whatever in their classroom and we will get 30 or so letters and it will say, you know, we sure hope

you consider the environment when you vote up there, and we think this is important.

Then among some of the correspondence that I really despise getting is similar from some third grade class somewhere that says, you know, we really wish you would quit raping the environment, or words to that effect. I sure hated the way you voted on H.R. such and such signed little Johnny, Mrs. Beasley's third grade class, and it is just simply a brainwashing that has been going on in that classroom.

Now, that happens with or without help from Washington sometimes, but I will say that my concern is any program that the EPA has to do with it then has to do with education concerns me in that I think the culture, the institutional culture is such that it is in the EPA. Although, I am sure some people that work there mean well, it is so far to the left of what I consider common sense, it concerns me that they would have an aspect of forming thoughts in young people's minds across the country.

I would say that if there were as conservative a culture as I perceive to be the liberal culture in the EPA, I would also be very concerned that a conservative culture that far to the right would have an effect on young people's minds. So this whole program concerns me along with the fact that I am not sure the priority is right; we could use the money somewhere else a lot more effectively. With that I appreciate and I am not impugning anyone's motivations here but that is a real concern of mine. I would like to yield the remainder of my time to my colleague Mr. Schaffer.

Mr. Schaffer. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Kasper, are you familiar with the freedom of information request that was made to the EPA by Mr. Chris Horner who was the council for the Competitive Enterprise Institute?

Mr. Kasper. No, I cannot say that I am.

Mr. Schaffer. Well, he made that request on July 21, 1999. The request also included a fee waiver for costs associated with reproducing and duplicating documents. The EPA routinely grants these waiver requests for nonprofit groups; does that sound right to you?

Mr. Kasper. There are revisions for that. I do not know if this is fraud or not.

Mr. Schaffer. The EPA does routinely grant these waiver requests but that waiver request was denied in this case. There was an appeal and the EPA just on March 30th reversed this decision and said on June 6, excuse me, that the EPA would comply with the law and provide the documents and the fee waiver. But it said it cannot provide those documents until September 30, 2000. Now, that is significant because those documents are important to our evaluation here in evaluating whether to reauthorize the program. But September 30th seems an awful long time away. I understand in the case of the request this was one made by an outside group, a nonprofit organization.

Is there any reason why you could not provide those documents to this Committee within a week?

Mr. Kasper. I would have to check into that and get back to you, Mr. Schaffer. I am not familiar with the case.

Mr. Schaffer. Let me make the request then right now. I would like the committee to receive the documents requested by Mr. Chris Horner within one week. That does not seem to me to be an unreasonable request, and I think it is important to the continuation of this hearing.

Let me also ask, are you aware of any examples of environmental education programs and activities in which students actually studied all sides of an environmental issue and came to conclusions that were contrary to EPA positions?

Mr. Kasper. Not specifically, but there is research which we could supply you with which shows that the more children learn about environmental issues...

Mr. Schaffer. That is an interesting theory. I am interested in specific examples.

Mr. Kasper. They become less believers in the regulatory approach, that is the best way I can...

Mr. Schaffer. Could you provide this committee with specific examples within a reasonable time period?

Mr. Kasper. Yes.

Mr. Schaffer. Finally, the other question I have is really one that Mr. Hilleary touched on right at the conclusion of his remarks. That is, this program receives about $7 million a year in appropriations from Congress. Can you assure the committee that those dollars would not be better spent directly in classrooms?

Mr. Kasper. Directly in classrooms?

Mr. Schaffer. Yes. Getting dollars to the classrooms for material supplies?

Mr. Kasper. That is the point of the program. It gets the dollars out...

Mr. Schaffer. No, I mean if we got those dollars to classrooms through the general appropriations programs for American schools, are they better spent in the EPA or would the $7 million be better spent in classrooms?

Mr. Kasper. To advance environmental education or that...

Mr. Schaffer. No, just to leave it up to the discretion of professional teachers to do the best job that they can of teaching children.

Mr. Kasper. But we do that with this program. We send the federal dollars to the state and local programs.

Mr. Schaffer. So your answer is yes? Is your answer yes?

Mr. Kasper. Yes to which question?

Mr. Schaffer. Are these dollars better spent in your program or would they be better spent if we just directly sent $7 million additional dollars to America's classrooms?

Mr. Kasper. For the goals we are trying to advance, we think they are better spent through our program.

Mr. Schaffer. So your answer is, that they are better spent at the EPA than they are through classroom.

Mr. Kasper. For advancing environmental education, but they are spent in classrooms ultimately.

Mr. Schaffer. So, your answer is yes.

Mr. Kasper. My answer is that to advance the goals of environmental education...

Mr. Schaffer. I did not ask that tough. In terms of our goals as Congressmen and women of trying to promote quality education in America, I have got to tell you, our principals around the country tell us, get the dollars to the classroom, fully fund federal mandates that exist, do not be spending cash on extraneous programs, that is what they tell me. But you are not a teacher you are somebody different and I am asking for your opinion since you are here. Is this $7 million better spent on the EPA environmental education program or would it be better spent directly sending those dollars to classrooms around the country?

Mr. Higgins. I will answer for NEETF, Mr. Congressmen. You are getting a lot more bang for your buck by sending it through the EPA Office of Environmental Education, allowing us to structure programs and leverage the money 15 to one last year and get a lot more done with the dollars than would be done by simply sending them to the classroom.

Dr. Simmons. I think another issue is that it is a dichotomy, which does not need to be made -- that somehow this money is different from money that is spent on education. This is environmental education and environmental education promotes education. It promotes good quality education and the development of understandings in science, in mathematics, in social studies, and the skills the students need for communication and to be able to become good citizens.

It is not an either/or issue. We have environmental education it serves a good purpose, it also serves the purpose, the general-purpose of education and through this Act those monies are getting down at the classroom level and helping to support good quality education over all.

Chairman Castle. Thank you.

Mr. Ford.

Mr. Ford. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I apologize to the witnesses, particularly to the gentleman, Mr. Kasper, for the badgering. I heard your answer and I appreciate Mr. Higgins making clear to the committee why it is somewhat important to send money

through an agency that can help leverage dollars and perhaps get a bigger bang for the buck which I would imagine all of us would be interested here.

One of my colleagues, my friend from my home State of Tennessee talked a little bit about decisions and where these decisions are made and that there is a concern that often times decisions in Washington do not necessarily reflect priorities of those at the local level.

But if I'm not mistaken, if it were not for you, Mr. Higgins, perhaps it was Mr. Kasper. It might have been Dr. Simmons that said that most of these decisions are being made at the local level, that you provide the grants for the decisions as to how the money is going to be used at the local level. Is that the case? Just for the record, if you would not mind stating that one more time.

So, the EPA does not necessarily go, for instance, my district, Memphis, Tennessee, and you tell the group how to use it and if they do not use it a certain way you are going to take the money back. They design their program or their initiative and sort of proceed that way. Perhaps you can correct me if I am wrong, but that was my understanding.

Dr. Simmons. A great number of the programs are instigated at the local level and then funding is requested from NEETF or the EPA, they are designed at the local level.

The other part is that again through the Environmental Education and Training Partnership a great deal of the money has been what we call "pass-through" grants. So, that is money that goes directly to states for state-initiated projects.

Mr. Ford. So the EPA is not necessarily in the business of saying, this is how you are going to spend this money. You all solicit these ideas, I guess, from local entities and then based on some criteria, and I understand we are now going to shift, if Mr. Castle has his way, and I tend to support his bill. He has some scientifically sound based projects and you allow the locals to then proceed based on the application or the ideas of specifics in which they sent the EPA; is that the case, Mr. Kasper?

Mr. Kasper. Generally, Mr. Ford. All the grant proposals begin at the local level and we put them through a rigorous review process, but the decisions are made and the programs are run at the local level?

Mr. Ford. The EPA gets blamed for a lot of things, and I for one am from an agricultural state and have some questions and concerns about some of the practices at the Environment Protection Agency. However, I want to be on record as saying I support what you do. The economy over the last eight years has grown unlike it has ever grown and I think we have taken more substantial and meaningful steps to ensure that our environment is clean and that we are trying to educate people about how to maintain that.

I would say to my colleagues on the other side of the aisle who constantly throw out the EPA, I think we even blame the EPA for the gas price increases. If you do have something to do with that, I would hope that you guys would correct it over at the EPA, although I do not know if you have that in your power. I imagine if you and the administrator did it, you probably would have done that already.

As I yield back my time I say to my friend, I know who has left from the State of Tennessee, one of the things that we have to deal with as Congress is that people are going to disagree with some of the decisions that we make, and whether it is children or those eligible to vote, we have to be willing to stare them in the eye and certainly explain and defend our position. I would hope that whatever decisions we make here in the Congress we are able to stand by them.

I thank the Chairman for his leadership on this and I look forward to supporting him and Mr. Kildee as we move forward from this point. I thank the witnesses again for coming and yield back the balance of my time.

Chairman Castle. Thank you. I will give myself the final five minutes here. First, I apologize. I am the subcommittee chairman and I should have been chairing this meeting. I apologize for not being able to be here. I was unavoidably detained in a meeting in the Senate on another issue that is very hot at this moment, shall we say, and I had to deal with those issues.

However, the Chairman of the full committee obviously took over and probably did a far better job than I would have anyhow. So, we all benefited from this.

Let me ask you this question, Mr. Kasper, if you know the answer. When you talk about sending funds under the National Environmental Education Act to the local schools and nature centers, what percentage of the overall funding, that is, $7 million is the figure I have heard bandied about here, does this represent? If you know, or somebody can help you with that answer if you do not know the specifics of the budget.

Mr. Kasper. Generally, it runs about 60 percent, Mr. Chairman, and the actual overhead costs for the program...

Chairman Castle. Can you pull the microphone a little closer to you? Sorry.

Mr. Kasper. It is about 60 percent.

Chairman Castle. All right.

Mr. Kasper. If you are interested in overhead costs, they come out to about 10 percent. I am talking about training, publications, computers, and telephones, that sort of thing.

Chairman Castle. Right. So, the 60 percent are dollars that stay in the classroom or go to the classroom, is that correct? Just so we know that figure.

Mr. Kasper. Generally.

Chairman Castle. They are not used for organizational purposes. You say "generally" but I assume that...

Mr. Kasper. Organizational purposes, no.

Chairman Castle. It is used at the local level, assuming in the classroom; is that...

Mr. Kasper. In the classroom or in community organizations that are administering the projects.

Chairman Castle. Okay. Thank you.

Dr. Simmons, as part of developing these guidelines did you take special efforts to ensure that the criteria did not reflect subjective or biased views, and how did you ensure, if you did that, that they were balanced and unbiased?

Dr. Simmons. Well, one of the things that we did is we followed a process of critique and consensus. We developed first a research base of what was currently being said out in the field and in education in general about what good quality education consisted of. Then we formed a writing team that tried to reflect a diverse audience of environmental educators.

We included business interests on that writing team, we included scientists, we included classroom teachers, we included people from universities and state Departments of Education on that writing team. Then what we did was we advertised widely in the education and scientific communities and asked people to comment on various drafts of the guidelines.

So we would draft a set of the guidelines, send them out for review, receive those comments back, and then revise them as we got the feedback from the communities.

We made sure that the scientific communities were involved with reviewing those guidelines all along so that they were accurate from a scientific perspective. We also made sure that they were good quality guidelines in terms of education.

We involved groups like the National Science Teachers Association and the National Council for the Social Studies in that process.

Chairman Castle. I assume based on what you are saying then, that you feel that this is an unbiased viewpoint. I mean there is the feeling among some of the people that have asked questions here that there is a certain bias. A certain bias in the EPA, certain conclusions, and perhaps that is carried out as these guidelines are developed in terms of what goes into the classroom.

Dr. Simmons. Right.

Chairman Castle. I think it is very important if we cannot refute that notion that there will be some difficulty in going forth with this bill. That is the point that I am trying to make here. I just want to ensure that when you did your scientific studies and spoke to these people that they were not all of a particular school.

Dr. Simmons. No.

Chairman Castle. You were looking at perhaps different conclusions from different scientific experts in trying to strike some balance with respect. I think it is a legitimate concern that at some point with young people you must present both sides of an issue and let them reach their own conclusions. I just want to make sure that this was not a totally pre-conceived, one-sided notion with respect to certain environmental conclusions when

there may be contrasting opinions as we all know there are in the environment.

Dr. Simmons. Yes. Not at all. I mean, our whole purpose was to have as open and as wide a review of the document as possible. We did receive opinions from a wide range of people from a wide range of different types of expertise. If you look at the material guidelines in particular, their whole purpose is to point out the need for fairness, accuracy, balance, inquiry, the need for allowing students to be open or having that openness to be able to ask their own questions and the need to have diversity reflected within the classrooms.

Chairman Castle. Okay. Thank you.

Now, let me just close. I think everyone has had a chance…

Mr. Schaffer. I would ask unanimous consent that the testimony of Dr. Michael Sanera be submitted as testimony for this hearing and be included in today's record.

See Appendix H for the testimony of Dr. Michael Sanera

See Appendix I for the letter to Mr. John Kasper of the Environmental Protection Agency from Representative Bob Schaffer (R-CO)

Chairman Castle. With out objection, so ordered.

Let me just make a point too that the record is open here for 14 days for any further submissions.

Let me thank very much the panel for being here today. Again, I apologize for my partial absence. It is always disruptive when anyone is scheduled to be here, at least half of your day was committed, and if you are traveling, maybe even more. We appreciate your time, and I appreciate the members of the subcommittee for being here today. There was actually very active participation in this hearing today which is always good because it shows us exactly what we need to consider in terms of furthering legislation or not.

We thank the members as well as the witnesses for being here today. Let me yield briefly to Mr. Kildee for any closing remarks.

Mr. Kildee. I thank you, Mr. Chairman. I certainly hope we would act upon this legislation. The Senate has already acted upon it they passed it by unanimous consent. You can hardly get that for the prayer over there in the morning.

The EPA was created under President Richard Nixon this program was put into the EPA by President George Bush. Mr. Schaffer, for whom I have great respect, but we disagree from time to time, talked about the EPA being political. I think it is the least political agency we have dealt with.

I mean, when the Michigan delegation finally insisted on meeting with Carol Browner, and this has been true of her predecessors too, she is objective. She came with

a court reporter over here to one of our offices and said, "Now, everything that is said in this meeting is going to be part of the official record." I think that it is a very non-political group. They have beliefs, they have principles, they have scientific principles of which they try to live by, but to call it political she is like a sphinx.

Mr. Schaffer. Would the gentleman yield on that point?

Mr. Kildee. I will when I come to a semicolon. She is like a sphinx compared to Alan Greenspan who is like a jingle-jaw as compared to her. She is really tough and her predecessors have been tough. I would certainly think that to call them "political" they might have scientific principles that is somewhat different than politics.

I would be glad to yield to the gentleman from Colorado.

Mr. Schaffer. Well, I tend to agree with you about the professional mannerisms and styles of the head of the agency, but I cannot remember, you are on the Resources Committee as well, are you not?

Mr. Kildee. Yes, I am on the Resource Committee. I've been there for 20 years.

Mr. Schaffer. The two examples that come to my mind that I think are clear examples of a politicized agency is one total maximum daily load decision that the EPA just made a few weeks ago. This with respect to moving forward and applying these regulations to American industry and exempting the U.S. Forest Service, for example, which study after study has pointed to as one of the prime causes in the case of poor management of national forests and the degradation of water quality. The decision to exempt the United States Forest Service is a clear indication of a politically motivated double standard, which the Forest Service testified in the subcommittee last week, effectively stated it in those terms that we are another federal agency and they distrust us.

Secondly, is the Grand Canyon study on regional haze in the west where the EPA came to a clear conclusion that the largest contributor to regional haze in the west is federal land managers, not industry; yet, the regulatory process that continues to move forward does not entail any modifications of federal land managers. They have been exempt, again, as result of a political decision, not one based on science.

Sometimes that term "political" becomes one that is viewed with negative connotation, but I think it is a fair word to use because the EPA routinely makes decisions based on the...not partisan politics I am speaking. I guess I am using "P", the small "p" of political decisions that are based on the economic realities of distributing scarce resources across various federal agencies.

Mr. Kildee. Well, we would not agree on this, but I do think that the EPA has had a good record and certainly our environment has been vastly improved since Richard Nixon established the EPA. We are breathing cleaner air, we are drinking cleaner water, we have a much better environment. I do think that they have a sterling record of trying to live by scientific principle.

We can use the word "political" I have never seen it as a capital "P" except when it is the first word of a sentence. But capital "P" or lower case, I do not know what you are referring to there. But I do think that the American people are living in a healthier

lifestyle. My children and my grandchildren are certainly going to be healthier because of the scientific basis of the EPA decisions that have really cleaned up our environment. We were really going downhill and we have a sensitivity and I think part of EPA's role is to assist schools in trying to help people become more sensitive to our environment. I think this is an excellent program to do that.

I yield back the balance of my time, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman Castle. Let me just finally conclude by saying a couple of things sparked by this conversation. One is, while it is interesting, I think, and perhaps worthwhile, to have a broader discussion of the value of the EPA and the politics or non-politics or science or non-science of the EPA, frankly my focus is on this program and this $7 million; how fairly is it being applied; is it helpful to our children? I care about the children.

I think all of us care about the children. I do not care much about how it comes down to them, but it is the teachers in the classroom or the children that ultimately we need to make a decision on. If this is in some way being impacted negatively by the methodologies that happen, that is something we need to find out. If it is not and indeed environmental education for a relatively small sum of money is valuable to our children, then that is something that I think we should move ahead with. I am never dismissive of overriding issues of EPA and what is it doing, or whatever it may be, but I would hope we would all, at this committee, at some point look at the narrow constraints of what we are dealing with in this particular program -- that is the work that we have to do. We appreciate the witnesses speaking to that. With that, the subcommittee stands adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 11:18 a.m., the subcommittee adjourned.]

APPENDIX A -- OPENING STATEMENT OF CHAIRMAN WILLIAM F. GOODLING, COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION AND THE WORKFORCE, WASHINGTON, D.C.

OPENING STATEMENT OF REP. BILL GOODLING (R-PA)
Subcommittee on Early Childhood, Youth and Families
Hearing On "Examining the National Environmental Education Act"
Tuesday, June 27, 2000
9:30 A.M.

Ladies and Gentlemen:

Good morning. Chairman Castle will be with us briefly but he has asked me to go ahead and begin the hearing.

It is my pleasure to welcome you here today to our subcommittee hearing on "Examining the National Environmental Education Act." This morning we'll review the implementation and administration of the programs contained within the act, talk about what works and does not work in environmental education, and seek recommendations as to where improvements can be made.

For over twenty years the federal government has played a role in providing the resources for promoting environmental education. The National Environmental Education Act, which was last authorized in 1990, established the Office of Environmental Education within the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to help increase public understanding of the environment. The program awards grants for training teachers to develop and teach environmental curricula; supports internships and fellowships to encourage environmental professions; funds national environmental awards; and funds workshops and conferences to promote environmental education.

In addition, the act established a nonprofit foundation, the National Environmental Education and Training Foundation (NEETF) to encourage cooperation between the public and private sectors to support environmental education and training.

There are concerns that certain environmental curricula favor a specific perspective or agenda and any authorization legislation should ensure that the program has a sound science foundation.

I understand and want to consider a variety of opinions as we examine the National Environmental Education Act.

I'll keep my remarks brief this morning because I am anxious to hear from our witnesses. Today's witnesses are experts in this field and will provide us with the necessary insight on how we can continue and improve the environmental education program. With that, I now turn to the ranking member, Representative Kildee for any statement he might have.

APPENDIX B -- THE OPENING STATEMENT OF THE HONORABLE DALE E. KILDEE, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF MICHIGAN, AND RANKING MEMBER, SUBCOMMITTEE ON EARLY CHILDHOOD, YOUTH AND FAMILIES

Statement of the Honorable Dale E. Kildee
Ranking Member, Subcommittee on Early Childhood, Youth and Families
Subcommittee Hearing on the National Environmental Education Act
June 26, 2000

Good morning, I am happy to join Chairman Castle at today's hearing on the National Environmental Education Act. This Act, which has unfortunately been unauthorized since 1996, is an important effort to bring further environmental awareness to our schools and communities. I am hopeful that the bipartisan legislation introduced yesterday by Chairman Castle and I to reauthorize this program is the just beginning of our efforts on this issue, leading to enactment later this Congress.

Environmental education is about healthy people, strong and reliable businesses and economies, and livable communities. Environmental education is critical if we are to ensure a sound and protected environment for our future generations. Effective environmental education creates awareness of the relationships between people and places. It encourages an understanding and knowledge of the natural and built environment and promotes attitudes that value our planet's resources. Most importantly, it builds skills in our young people for identifying and addressing environmental issues, and motivates action and participation in environmental decision-making.

The John H. Chafee Environmental Education Act, not only honors a former college of ours, but keeps the spirit and mission of the original Environmental Education Act in place. The bill that Chairman Castle and I introduced yesterday is an excellent first step in extending this program, and I look forward to continuing our bipartisan efforts to strengthen our legislation and this program in the remaining days of this Congress. Thank you Mr. Chairman.

APPENDIX C -- THE WRITTEN TESTIMONY OF MR. JOHN KASPER, ACTING DEPUTY ASSOCIATE ADMINISTRATOR, OFFICE OF COMMUNICATIONS, EDUCATION, AND MEDIA RELATIONS, ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY, WASHINGTON, D.C.

STATEMENT OF
JOHN KASPER
ACTING DEPUTY ASSOCIATE ADMINISTRATOR
FOR COMMUNICATIONS, EDUCATION AND MEDIA RELATIONS
U. S. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
BEFORE THE
SUBCOMMITTEE ON EARLY CHILDHOOD, YOUTH AND FAMILIES
U. S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

June 27, 2000

Mr Chairman and Members of the Subcommittee, thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today to discuss the importance of the Environmental Protection Agency's environmental education initiatives and program activities under the National Environmental Education Act of 1990 (NEEA).

EPA believes that citizens have a right and a responsibility to participate in the environmental protection decision-making process. We believe that the best way to encourage full citizen participation is to provide them with the knowledge, skills and abilities they need to make informed choices for themselves and their communities. The ultimate goal of environmental education is to develop an environmentally literate citizenry.

Environmental education provides opportunities to understand how ecology, economics and social issues are interdependent. Environmental education helps citizens understand the value of a clean environment to good health and a sustainable economy. It encourages the public to develop an attitude of commitment to protecting the environment. To be successful, environmental education must involve students, teachers, parents, school administrators, policy makers and the general public.

EPA has been promoting environmental education ever since its establishment. Environmental education initiatives cut across all EPA program offices and are a crucial component of our

regional activities. EPA works with federal, state and local government agencies, colleges and universities, business and industry, state and local education and natural protection agencies, primary and secondary education systems and not-for-profit organizations, in partnership, to advance quality environmental education and make environmental education available to all citizens.

EPA's Office of Environmental Education (OEE), has responsibility for the implementation of the National Environmental Education Act. OEE, working directly with the Environmental Education (EE) community, has developed a strategic vision for environmental education that is aligned with the Agency's environmental and health protection goals and with the needs and priorities of the education and environmental education communities. These strategic goals build upon the successful implementation of the NEEA and are designed to focus resources on the most important issue areas in environmental education. OEE's goals are:

- ~~To ensure long-term effectiveness/sustainability of EE programs by~~ supporting State **Capacity Building**
- To increase the quality and quantity of environmental education in grades K-12 by linking EE and **Education Reform**
- To encourage **Research** in environmental education that assesses EE's effectiveness in environmental protection and education improvement
- To improve the **Quality, Access, and Coordination** of EE information, resources, and programs
- To **Communicate and Demonstrate** the importance and relevance of environmental education to the public

These strategic goals are designed to make the most of the resources we have to reach the largest

number of people possible. The first three goals focus on the most important issues in environmental education today–state capacity building, education reform and research. Capacity building is developing the "infrastructure" of EE providers at the state level by enhancing leadership and organizational development skills that improve the coordinated delivery of EE across states. Education reform focuses on changing curricula, teaching methods and how schools are organized to improve student achievement. The last two goals are focused on helping the EPA improve its education and information programs. All activities undertaken by EPA's Office of Environmental Education should fit under one of these strategic goals.

OFFICE OF ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

Since 1992, the Office of Environmental Education has successfully implemented programs mandated by the National Environmental Education Act and is recognized as one of the leaders in the field of environmental education. OEE staff regularly participate as presenters and participants in national education conferences and are routinely called upon to work with other EPA program offices in the design, development and implementation of environmental education programs, projects and materials.

Training Teachers and Other Education Professionals

Under Section 5 of the National Environmental Education Act, EPA has awarded two multi-year cooperative agreements totaling over $18 million to deliver training and related support to education professionals. We will be awarding the third multi-year cooperative agreement later this year to build upon the work of the previous consortia, especially in state capacity building. Through this program, EPA and its partners seek to advance the field of environmental education

by demonstrating how EE can help achieve state and local education goals and improve training opportunities for educators who work across the country using the latest Internet technology. **To date, over 100,000 education professionals have received EE training under this program.** Training is provided by experts in existing EE programs, including Project WILD, WET and Learning Tree. Among our other accomplishments under this program are the development and implementation of:

National Environmental Education Guidelines–a set of voluntary national guidelines for materials development and evaluation, learner outcomes, and teacher preparation that were developed by Dr. Bora Simmons of Northern Illinois University and reviewed by hundreds of educators and professionals in the education and environmental education communities

State Leadership Clinics and Workshops–an opportunity for education professionals to develop skills for state capacity building. Leadership clinics have been held in Wisconsin, Missouri, California, and New Mexico.

EE-Link–an electronic database that links to other sources of environmental education information through the Internet

Ed Gateway–an Internet-based tool to help educators, in both the formal and non-formal settings find, organize, and share events, discussions, organizational information and documents. Currently, Ed-Gateway includes environmental and science educators and those involved in education reform

Providing Resources and Support for Local, State and National Environmental Education Efforts

Under the National Environmental Education Act, EPA provides funding to support local, state, tribal and national environmental education initiatives that enhance the public's awareness, knowledge and skills to make informed and responsible decisions that affect environmental quality.

Under Section 6 of the NEEA, awards are granted to state, local and tribal education or environmental agencies, not-for-profit organizations and non-commercial educational broadcasting entities, to develop projects that must enhance critical-thinking, problem-solving, and effective decision-making skills, as well as teach individuals to weigh various sides of an environmental issue. The grant program is administered by OEE Headquarters, with a portion of the funds allocated to EPA's 10 regional offices to ensure grants are equitably awarded in each state across the country. The majority of grants are awarded by our regional offices for proposals requesting $25,000 and half of those are for $5,000 or less. Headquarters awards grants over $25,000 and up to $250,000 with a broader, national focus and usually fewer than a dozen a year. Our education priorities are for projects that:

- Build state and local capacity to deliver EE programs;
-Advance state/local education reform goals;
-Educate the public through community-based initiatives;
-Train education and health professionals about the health threats of pollution, especially as it affects children;
-Improve teaching skills;
-Promote environmental careers; and

-Educate low-income or culturally-diverse audiences about environmental issues.

Since 1992, EPA has awarded over 2,000 grants in all 50 states, the District of Columbia and US territories totaling over $20M. Projects have ranged from pesticide safety workshops for homeowners in Delaware, to linking teachers across the state of Colorado to develop standards-based environmental education, to workshops for Indiana teachers to improve their environmental education knowledge, to working with Philadelphia 8th graders and their parents to study the impact of community water usage on the Delaware Estuary. We are providing, for the record, profiles of projects which received funding from 1992-1999.

Under Section 4 of the NEEA, EPA enters into interagency agreements with other federal agencies, especially those on the Federal Task Force on Environmental Education, to design and implement innovative EE programs. Our federal partners have included the Departments of Agriculture, Commerce, Education, Energy and Interior, Coastal America, the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, Peace Corps and the National Science Foundation. Since 1992, **over 40 collaborative projects, with a total contribution of approximately $4.2 million in EPA funds, have leveraged more than $12 million from other federal agencies and their state and local partners**. Projects include "Hands-on -the-Land"–an initiative to improve student learning by better use of the educational resources available on public lands in Florida, California, Utah, New Jersey, Washington, Nevada, Nebraska, Alaska and Oklahoma and National EE Guidelines Training Workshops–delivering training to education professionals on the use of the EE Guidelines for materials, learners and educators.

Under Section 4, OEE is also supporting environmental education research that assesses the effectiveness of EE programs to improve student learning and to reach environmental protection goals. OEE is also supporting needed research to assess environmental literacy in the country and

the use of education and information programs, economic incentives and non-economic social science to reach individuals, households and small- and medium-sized industries.

OEE is working with a number of leading environmental education researchers, providers, practitioners and policy makers to develop a national EE research agenda that details the specific research needs in environmental education. We are also currently working with the National Academy of Sciences to examine the success of education, information, social marketing and market incentive programs in reaching health and environmental protection goals.

Reaching Out to the Public and Other Audiences

EPA can not make decisions regarding our nation's environmental resources without involving the public. Helping the public understand the complexity of environmental issues by improving their knowledge and skills is one of the most important jobs we have at EPA. OEE funds benefit the public and promote environmental careers in several ways. These include:

1) Providing access on the Internet to quality environmental education materials

The **OEE Web Site** is one of the most popular in EPA and has served as a model for other EPA web sites. We have also supported the development of web pages devoted to **Kids, Students, and Teachers**. These sites contain hundreds of evaluated EPA environmental education materials specifically designed for the Internet

2) Inspiring students to start environmental protection projects in their communities

The **President's Environmental Youth Awards (PEYA) Program**, begun in the early 1970's, recognizes young people across the country for local community projects. The program encourages individuals, school classes, schools, summer camps, public interest

groups, and youth organizations to promote local environmental awareness and to channel this awareness into positive community involvement. Participating students are recognized at the regional level with certificates and winning projects are recognized at the national level.

3) Promoting environmental protection careers

The **National Network for Environmental Management Studies (NNEMS) Fellowship Program**, established by EPA in 1986, encourages college students to pursue environmental professions. The program is designed to provide students with an environmental research or training experience linked directly to their field of undergraduate or graduate study. **To date, over 1,100 fellowships have been granted to students in colleges and universities across the country.**

We are very proud of what has been accomplished under the National Environmental Education Act. Our funds have benefitted individuals, communities and organizations across the country and have had a major impact on the environmental education community. Our programs are well established and well respected. Under Section 4 of the National Environmental Education Act, OEE develops and supports programs, activities and initiatives designed to improve understanding of the natural and built environment and the relationship between humans and their environment. The only recommendation we would make for improving the National Environmental Education Act would be to allow more flexibility in the use of Section 4 funds to make a broader range of awards.

We appreciate the Subcommittee's invitation to appear here today and we look forward to continued work with the Subcommittee in pursuit of our mutual environmental education goals.

APPENDIX D -- INFORMATION ON THE OFFICE OF ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION'S GRANT AWARDS AND PROFILES ON FILE WITH THE SUBCOMMITTEE ON EARLY CHILDHOOD, YOUTH AND FAMILIES

APPENDIX E -- THE WRITTEN TESTIMONY OF MR. WALTER HIGGINS, CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD, NATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING FOUNDATION, WASHINGTON, D.C.

Testimony

June 27, 2000

Mr. Walter M. Higgins
Chairman of the Board of Trustees
The National Environmental Education & Training Foundation
and
Chairman and C.E.O., AGL Resources, Inc., Atlanta, Georgia

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify before the Early Childhood, Youth and Families Subcommittee of the Education & Workforce Committee. Since 1996, it has been my privilege to serve as a member, and since October 1998, as Chairman of the Board of Trustees of The National Environmental Education & Training Foundation, (or NEETF, as we refer to it). I also serve as Chairman and CEO of AGL Resources, Inc. of Atlanta, Georgia, formally Atlanta Gas and Light Co.

In 1990, Congress passed and President Bush signed into law The National Environmental Education Act. Among other things, the Act created NEETF as an independent, nonprofit organization for the purpose of developing public/private partnerships. The Foundation promotes balanced, science-based environmental education and training and works with EPA's Office of Environmental Education in the development of education and training programs that focus on non-regulatory approaches to enhancing the environmental knowledge of all Americans.

Over the last decade, NEETF has made great strides in developing public/private partnerships in environmental education and has made many important contributions to the field. The Foundation has successfully brought together the business community, nonprofit organizations and government agencies to focus on innovative, effective, voluntary programs to improve our nation's performance in critical areas of concern. These include:

- using the environment to improve academic performance in our K-12 schools;
- bringing environmental education to doctors and nurses which can lead to higher quality, more cost-effective health care;
- improving the environmental performance of more than 5 million small businesses in America to make them both more competitive and profitable and;
- helping Americans understand their roles as individuals in addressing the important and often complex issues surrounding water quality and natural resource stewardship.

NEETF's Institute for Corporate Environmental Mentoring, for example, uses the cumulative environmental expertise of large companies to "mentor" small businesses — often in their supply chain or customer base — and improve their environmental performance. Small businesses that are mentored generally produce cost savings and become more attractive as suppliers both at home and abroad. With the support of such companies as AT&T, RR Donnelley & Sons, ExxonMobil, Lockheed Martin, Volvo Cars of North America, Compaq Computer, Pitney Bowes, GE and others,

the Institute is developing curriculum packages and mentoring networks, through the nation's 1,200 community colleges.

A significant strength of The National Environmental Education Act lies in its ability to use Federal seed money to leverage private dollars. As part of their mission, NEETF and EPA's Office of Environmental Education use funds provided through the Act to award environmental education grants to organizations across the country. NEETF's grant program must be matched by private companies and other grant-making organizations – This generates significant private investment in environmental education with the added benefit of creating new partnerships and generating new private sector interest and support for environmental education at the local and state level. NEETF has awarded $3 million in grants , which, thus far, has generated $4.1 million in private matching funds and will approach $6 million in private investment when the current grant projects are completed. The Foundation currently requires all grantees to match the grants awarded to them on the basis of two non-Federal dollars for every Federal dollar given.

Overall, NEETF receives 10% of the funds appropriated through the National Environmental Education Act, which equaled $750,000 in FY'99. NEETF was able to generate $12 million of program activity with those funds – that's $15 for every appropriated dollar invested (See attached graph). That is a payback of which we can all be very proud.

The National Environmental Education Act is a powerful tool for developing balanced, age-appropriate, environmental education and training based on sound science. It has the

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added benefit on generating significant private sector interest and involvement in the important area of environmental learning.

On behalf of myself, the members of the NEETF Board of Trustees and many of my colleagues in the business community, who believe strongly that environmental learning will play an increasingly large role in improving the nation's environmental and economic performance, I urge the Committee to favorably consider reauthorization of The National Environmental Education Act.

Thank you very much for allowing me the opportunity to share these thoughts with you.

APPENDIX F – THE WRITTEN TESTIMONY OF DR. BORA SIMMONS, PROFESSOR OF CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION, NORTHERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY, DEKALB, ILLINOIS

Testimony

June 27, 2000

Deborah Simmons, Ph.D.
Professor, Department of Teacher Education
Northern Illinois University, DeKalb, Illinois
and
Former President, North American Association for Environmental Education

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Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to come before you today and present my views to the members of the Early Childhood, Youth and Families Subcommittee of the Committee on Education and the Workforce. I am Deborah Simmons, professor in the Department of Teacher Education at Northern Illinois University, DeKalb, Illinois. I am pleased to be here to support reauthorization of the National Environmental Education Act. For close to 30 years, environmental education has been my professional focus in both the traditional classroom, as well as informal educational settings such as nature centers and after-school programs. Currently I work with undergraduate students preparing to teach in elementary schools; with elementary and secondary school teachers in environmental education professional development programs; and with graduate degree candidates focused on environmental education. I also provide classes for students and their teachers in resident environmental education programs.

For eight years it was my privilege to serve as a member of the Board of the North American Association for Environmental Education (NAAEE) the primary professional association for educators in the area of the environment. I served as President of NAAEE in 1996.

The National Environmental Education Act has been of critical importance in the ongoing professionalization of the field of environmental education. The Act has made it possible to design, disseminate and promote environmental curriculum standards and materials that are fair and accurate, age-appropriate and based on sound science. With funds provided through the Act, professional training is provided to more than 100,000 teachers each year to assist them in integrating the environment into their classrooms in ways that meet their needs, their students' needs and the curricular requirements and standards set by the various states.

In 1996, with funds from the National Environmental Education Act, NAAEE asked me to lead the process of providing guidelines for environmental education. *Environmental Education Materials: Guidelines for Excellence* was developed with the input of more than 3,000 members of state, local and national organizations, including the National Science Teacher's Association, the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, The National Council for Social Studies, and the American Association for the Advancement of Science. The *Guidelines* allow these organizations, as well as individual school districts, schools and teachers to qualitatively measure the appropriateness of the content, materials, and presentation of their environmental

education programs. The guidelines provide teachers with professional parameters for high-quality environmental instruction. They establish criteria based upon fairness, accuracy, depth, skill building, instructional soundness and usability.

The *Guidelines for Excellence* reflect a widely shared consensus that professionally conceived environmental education programs must fully describe environmental problems, reflect the diversity of perspectives on them and foster awareness of the natural and built environment. In building lifelong skills, educators are expected to promote civic responsibility and encourage individual thinking with respect to problem-solving. Environmental education materials need to be well-designed, easy to use and rely upon techniques proven to create effective learning environments.

Finally, my first-hand experience as an environmental educator as well as a growing body of rigorous research suggests that students benefit directly from quality environment education:

1. Environmental education makes a difference in classrooms because it actively engages students in learning. Environmental education encourages students to make discoveries about the world around them, which, in turn, leads to the development of critical thinking skills. Students absorbed in subject matter learn better and tend to stay enthusiastically on-task.
2. According to a 1998 survey conducted by NEETF and Roper Starch Worldwide, 96% of parents want environmental education in their children's schools.

3. Environmental learning is valuable to students because it teaches them **how** to think, not **what** to think. Critical thinking skills, developed through environmental education, provide the foundation for decision-making and creative problem solving that individuals need throughout adolescence, young adulthood, middle-age and beyond. These critical thinking skills and the ability to work in teams are exactly what the business community tells us they critically need in the American workforce. Although we cannot fully predict what social, economic or global issues today's children will face in the year 2040 when they are adults, we do know that environmental education will provide the necessary foundation of critical thinking skills and help prepare them effectively for the world of work.

Thank you for your consideration of reauthorization of the National Environmental Education Act. I know I speak for literally thousands of teachers across America in asking you to take favorable action on the measure before you.

Committee on Education and the Workforce

Witness Disclosure Requirement – "Truth in Testimony"
Required by House Rule XI, Clause 2(g)

Your Name: Deborah Simmons			
1. Are you testifying on behalf of a Federal, State, or Local Governmental entity?		Yes	No X
2. Are you testifying on behalf of an entity other than a Government entity?		Yes X	No
3. Please list any federal grants or contracts (including subgrants or subcontracts) which you have received since October 1, 1997: National Project for Excellence in Environmental Education - 1996-2000 (Funded by U.S.E.P.A. as part of the Environmental Education and Training Partnership). Train-the-Trainer in the Guidelines for Excellence - 1998-2000 (Funded by U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service).			
4. Other than yourself, please list what entity or entities you are representing: North American Association for Environmental Education			
5. If your answer to question number 2 is yes, please list any offices or elected positions held or briefly describe your representational capacity with the entities disclosed in question number 4: Board of Directors (1990-1997) and President (1996) of NAAEE			
6. If your answer to question number 2 is yes, do any of the entities disclosed in question number 4 have parent organizations, subsidiaries, or partnerships to the entities for whom you are not representing?		Yes	No X
7. If the answer to question number 2 is yes, please list any federal grants or contracts (including subgrants or subcontracts) which were received by the entities listed under question 4 since October 1, 1997, including the source and amount of each grant or contract: See attached			

Signature: Deborah Simmons Date: 6-26-00

Please attach this sheet to your written testimony

END

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October 1, 1997 to JUNE 26, 2000

FEDERAL ASSISTANCE SUMMARY
GRANTS, COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS, & PURCHASE ORDERS/TRAINING ORDERS

ACTIVITY ORGANIZATION	PURPOSE	TOTAL IN GRANT
Environmental Protection Agency (GR)	Environmental Education and Training Partnership (EETAP) funding for Urban Leadership Collaboratives, EE Affiliates and Pass through grants to other EE organizations	$7,752,460 (primarily pass-through grants to partners)
Environmental Protection Agency (GR) (Multi-year cumulative funding from 1996)	Training and Environmental Education Materials for Eastern and Central Europe and for Latin America (TIPS/TREM)	$331,942
Environmental Education Agency (GR)	National, regional and state level support for environmental education conferences	$60,000 (primarily pass-through grants to states)
U.S. National Wildlife Service 1448-91 (GR)	Biodiversity Education Network (BEN) seed funding	$40,000 (primarily pass-through grants to BEN Network members)
Environmental Protection Agency W7[illegible] (PO)	Conference sponsorship	$15,000
Fish and Wildlife Service 1448-91 (GR)	Conference Scholarships	$10,000
Fish and Wildlife Service 91 (GR)	Environmental Issues Forums training	$7,500
Fish and Wildlife Service 91 (GR)	Environmental Issues Forums training	$7,000
Environmental Protection Agency X (PO)	Purchase of Environmental Education Guidelines for Excellence	$6,910
[illegible] Environmental	Conference Scholarships	$5,000
[illegible]	Conference Scholarships	$5,000

(GR - cooperative agreement
(PO - purchasing order)

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PERSONAL INFORMATION: Please provide the committee with a copy of your resume (or a curriculum vitae) or just answer the following questions:

A. Please list any employment, occupation, or work related experiences, and education or training which relate to your qualifications to testify on or knowledge of the subject matter of the hearing.

Professor, Department of Teacher Education, Northern Illinois University, DeKalb, Illinois, 1987-present. Teach environmental education to undergraduate and graduate students in our teacher preparation programs.

Director, National Project for Excellence in Environmental Education, 1996-present. Developed Environmental Education Materials: Guidelines for Excellence and other documents related to quality environmental education.

Professor, Environmental Studies, Montclair State University, Upper Montclair, New Jersey, 1984-1987.

Post Doctoral Scholar, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, Michigan, 1983-84.

B. Please provide any other information you wish to convey to the Committee which might aid the members of the Committee to understand better the context of your testimony:

I have been actively involved in environmental education since 1972. I have taught environmental education at the middle school and high school levels, worked at nature centers, taught at the university level, been an active researcher, and conducted professional development workshops for teachers and other environmental educators around the country.

I received the NAAEE award for Outstanding Research in Environmental Education in 1996 and currently serve as an executive editor of the Journal of Environmental Education.

Please attach to your written testimony

END

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APPENDIX G – THE WRITTEN TESTIMONY OF MR. RICHARD ANDERSON, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, MARYLAND ENVIRONMENTAL BUSINESS ALLIANCE, BALTIMORE, MARYLAND

Testimony

June 27, 2000

Mr. Richard Anderson
Executive Director
Maryland Environmental Business Alliance

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify before the Early Childhood Youth and Families Subcommittee of the Education & Workforce Committee. As Executive Director of the Maryland Environmental Business Alliance, I represent 460 companies that provide environmental consulting, technological and contractual services. Our membership clearly demonstrates that the environment stimulates commercial activity, has created market demand for specialized expertise in the field, particularly for small, local businesses, and provides livelihoods for numerous Maryland families.

More than 5 million small businesses in America constitute the nation's fastest-growing economic sector. 80% of all businesses in America have fewer than 10 employees and 99.7% have fewer than 500. Approximately 97% of Maryland's 126,000 businesses operated in 1998 as small businesses — with 500 or fewer employees — according to the Maryland Small Business Administration. Maryland's environmental business sector, including everything from waste management to water treatment facilities, accounts for the state's 7th largest gross tax contribution.

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The wave of small business growth, however, has missed the environmental revolution that big business experienced two decades ago. Small businesses need to learn that commercial and environmental benefits exist beyond regulatory compliance. The National Environmental Education & Training Foundation (called NEETF), through its Institute for Córporate Environmental Mentoring, is working on an environmental education program that will be delivered to small business owners and their employees through a national network of 1,200 community colleges. These colleges provide an important link to accessible, affordable environmental learning that leads to improved environmental performance, reduced operational costs, greater efficiency and increased competitiveness. Large businesses have mastered techniques such as waste management in order to thrive and compete. Increasingly, they are requiring smaller vendors in their supply chains to become equally "green." The National Environmental Education Act supports efforts to provide environmental education and training to small businesses to improve their business acumen and environmental performance while improving the bottom line. The reauthorized Act would also support an expanded network of courses and colleges that develop adult environmental learning opportunities.

The Maryland Business Alliance supports the efforts of the National Environmental Education & Training Foundation and the Institute for Corporate Environmental Mentoring as they expand environmental education and training opportunities for small businesses, increase the number of participating community colleges and build environmental support for small business through 1,000 Small Business Administration centers located throughout the U.S.

The National Environmental Education Act calls for the development of an environmentally conscious and responsible public and a well-trained and environmentally literate workforce. Environmental education, provided locally to small business owners, is a low-cost non-regulatory approach to assisting small and medium-sized businesses in recognizing and exploiting environmental opportunities that result in overall economic growth. NEETF's Institute for Corporate Environmental Mentoring is a fine example of how this legislation can empower small businesses and add to economic growth through environmental education.

The National Environmental Education Act supports economic initiative and provides continued technical assistance for small business owners across America. On behalf of 460 Maryland businesses, I urge the Committee to favorably consider reauthorization of the National Environmental Education Act.

Thank you very much for the opportunity to share my perspective with you.

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Committee on Education and the Workforce

Witness Disclosure Requirement – "Truth in Testimony"
Required by House Rule XI, Clause 2(g)

Your Name: RICHARD W. ANDERSON JR

	Yes	No
1. Are you testifying on behalf of a Federal, State, or Local Governmental entity?		X
2. Are you testifying on behalf of an entity other than a Government entity?	X	

3. Please list any federal grants or contracts (including subgrants or subcontracts) which you have received since October 1, 1997:

NONE

4. Other than yourself, please list what entity or entities you are representing:

MARYLAND ENVIRONMENTAL BUSINESS ALLIANCE

5. If your answer to question number 2 is yes, please list any offices or elected positions held or briefly describe your representational capacity with the entities disclosed in question number 4:

	Yes	No
6. If your answer to question number 2 is yes, do any of the entities disclosed in question number 4 have parent organizations, subsidiaries, or partnerships to the entities for whom you are not representing?		

7. If the answer to question number 2 is yes, please list any federal grants or contracts (including subgrants or subcontracts) which were received by the entities listed under question 4 since October 1, 1997, including the source and amount of each grant or contract:

NONE

Signature: [signature]

Date: 6/26/2000

Please attach this sheet to your written testimony

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PERSONAL INFORMATION: Please provide the committee with a copy of your resume (or a curriculum vitae) or just answer the following questions:

A. Please list any employment, occupation, or work related experiences, and education or training which relate to your qualifications to testify on or knowledge of the subject matter of the hearing:

EDUCATION

B.S., EDUCATION, MILLERSVILLE UNIVERSITY

MBA, PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION, UNIVERSITY OF BALTIMORE

EMPLOYMENT

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, MARYLAND ENVIRONMENTAL BUSINESS ALLIANCE

SENIOR POSITION, ANDERSON, HUDDLE & ASSOCIATES ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY & PLANNING CONSULTANT SERVICE.

B. Please provide any other information you wish to convey to the Committee which might aid the members of the Committee to understand better the context of your testimony:

Please attach to your written testimony

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APPENDIX H – THE WRITTEN TESTIMONY OF DR. MICHAEL SANERA, DIRECTOR AND SENIOR FELLOW, CENTER FOR ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION RESEARCH, COMPETITIVE ENTERPRISE INSTITUTE, TUSCAN, ARIZONA

Statement of Dr. Michael Sanera
Director and Senior Fellow
Center for Environmental Education Research
A Project of the Competitive Enterprise Institute

Submitted to the
House Early Childhood, Youth and Families Subcommittee
of the Education and the Workforce Committee
June 27, 2000

I believe that high quality elementary and secondary school education about the environment is essential for our children. Our children understand more than many adults do that their future depends on continuing the progress we have made on cleaning up and protecting our environment. That is why I support improving the environmental literacy of our children by implementing high standards of scientific and economic knowledge and critical thinking skills. It is essential that we use the environment, in which many of our children are naturally fascinated, to stimulate an interest in science.

My research over the last eight years has focused on what children learn about the environment. When children are taught about nature (life cycles of plants and animals, the water cycle, photosynthesis), they generally receive a quality education because these topics are tied closely to scientific principles. Many of these programs are conducted out-of-doors where children learn about science and also experience the wonders and beauty of nature first-hand.

Conversely, when children are taught about environmental issues such as global warming, acid rain, endangered species, and world population growth, they are typically provided biased and one-sided information emphasizing only the catastrophic, doomsday version of each of these environmental issues. Other scientific points of view are rarely provided. Thus, students are robbed of the information they need to engage in critical thinking about the important environmental issues that confront this nation and the world.

These conclusions are based on the application of rigorous content analysis to more than 150 textbooks published by the leading textbook publishers in the nation. It is the rare exception that I have found an objective, balanced presentation on a controversial environmental issue in textbook.

Instead of objective, unbiased coverage of all aspects of environmental controversies, students receive a "call to action." They are bombarded with class exercises and activities urging them to adopt "environmentally correct" behaviors that have not been critically examined or, worse yet, to engage in political activities. Students are not only encouraged to write letters to their congressmen and lobby their city council members, they are taught sophisticated political action skills in order to make those activities more effective. The national movement supporting environmental education makes political action training an integral part of its definition of environmental education and state policies governing grants and curriculum design urge environmental educators to include it as part of their environmental education programs and activities.

Which brings me to the issue at hand: the EPA's stewardship over EE. I would like to be able to provide you with a detailed report on the EPA's actions and activities in support of environmental education. Unfortunately, I cannot and I will let you draw your own conclusions from the facts I am about to report.

In order to obtain the information necessary to review EPA's stewardship over

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environmental education, CEI Counsel Chris Horner submitted a FOIA request to the EPA on July 21, 1999. That request also sought a fee waiver for the costs involved with the search and duplication of the documents requested. This waiver is typically granted to not-for-profit entities with an educational function, the intention and ability to disseminate that information gained, and no commercial interest in the information sought (see 5 U.S.C. Section, and EPA regulations on this matter, 40 C.F.R.). As has been well established in the courts, fees (and fee waivers) were not intended to be used as a weapon to protect information or frustrate particular parties seeking information. Equally well established is the fact that agencies are often predisposed to so using the costs associated with document requests. CEI satisfies generally, and specifically in this case, all of the relevant criteria for having fees waived for document requests.

In January 2000 the EPA denied the fee waiver requested Mr. Horner responded by bringing to EPA's attention that CEI had acquired knowledge through a completely unrelated inquiry also under the Freedom of Information Act, that EPA routinely grants the waiver request for non-profit groups. Indeed, EPA granted all such requests without exception during the period covered by the relevant inquiry, all to groups sympathetic to EPA . Critically, none of these groups had as a subject of their inquiry the actions of EPA, but a member of the regulated community or activity generally of which these groups did not approve, or sought to concern the public. Mr. Horner also presented information obtained through another FOIA that, for an overlapping if slightly longer period of time, the only fee waiver requests pursued of, but denied by EPA were those sought by CEI. Interestingly, those requests clearly had as the focus of their inquiry the actions of EPA. Those fee waiver requests were all rejected, and all reversed, on appeal, as inappropriate.

This specific appeal of the denial of the fee waiver for EE documents was reversed, after eight months of the request languishing, on March 30. Subsequently, if over two months later, on June 6th EPA informed us that they would indeed comply with the law and provide documents, and that the materials would be delivered no sooner than September 30, 2000. Conveniently for proponents of this bill and, to the extent there is a distinction, opponents of CEI obtaining information regarding EPA's EE activities, Congress is of course expected to be adjourned, sine die, and this legislation's fate sealed, by September 30, 2000.

Despite not having the documents requested about the EPA's environmental education activities, I can report that one of the largest amounts of EPA money goes both directly and indirectly to a program that has nothing to do with delivering quality environmental education to kids or to improving the knowledge and skills of their teachers. The National Environmental Education Advancement Project (NEEAP) at the University of Wisconsin at Stevens Point, funded by EPA money, exists to develop and train political coalitions in the states. The purpose of these coalitions is to pressure state and local officials to adopt a comprehensive environmental education program. Thus, the federal EPA funds a program building political coalitions that lobby state legislators to pass more state mandates to require the teaching of environmental education, pass grant programs funded by state moneys, and establish state-funded bureaucracy to supervise the implementation of these programs.

Anyone interested in the integrity of the federal system of separation of powers between the state and federal governments must be repulsed by this heavy-handed federal effort to lobby state officials. I know from personal experience that when state legislators find out about this EPA activity, they are outraged. In Texas, angry state legislators let it be known that the state organization receiving the federal funds should no longer accept those funds.

But the larger issue is this: Should an environmental agency which has a stake in the outcome of environmental policy debates be responsible for environmental education, especially when that environmental education includes a heavy dose of political action training? Common sense alone reveals that there is a conflict of interest here. Does anyone really believe that the EPA can support a truly dispassionate, objective, and unbiased educational program which examines both the strengths and weaknesses of its implementation of the Clean Air or Water Acts or the Superfund program? To allay this fear, the EPA should produce examples of environmental education programs and activities in which students actually studied all sides of an environmental issue and came to conclusions that were contrary to EPA policy positions. Until those examples are produced, Congress should remain very skeptical about the EPA's ability to overcome this serious conflict of interest.

To correct the problems that exist in environmental education in our schools, Congress should consider the following options:

1. Create a truly independent commission of scientists and economists to examine the content of the environmental education that actually takes place in this nation's classrooms. This commission should determine what the typical student learns in the typical classroom about such controversial issues as global warming, acid rain, air pollution, and endangered species. This information should be compared to the current scientific literature on these subjects to ensure that it accurately and fairly reflects the current scientific consensus and diversity of views on these issues. Students must receive information from a variety of sources so that they can critically think about each topic and intelligently draw their own conclusions.

2. Transfer the federal responsibility for environmental education from the EPA to the National Science Foundation. While environmental education is a multi-disciplinary topic, it is, at its core, science. Given the current problems in the field, the primary task needs to be to get the science right. Students must be provided a solid grounding in the basic scientific principles before they are capable of handling the more complex multi-disciplinary aspects of environmental education. The NSF should be asked to include this mission with their current science education activities.

3. Establish an Environmental Education Advisory Council to help the NSF wit this task. This Council should be dominated by scientists and economists, not environmental educators or environmental activists. Congress should consider a distribution such as 45 percent scientists (not exclusively environmental scientists), 45 percent economists, and 10 percent educators. This Advisory Council would function to continuously continuing review textbooks and curriculum materials. Parents must be assured that materials are providing their children with objective and balanced presentations of environmental issues.

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APPENDIX I – LETTER TO MR. JOHN KASPER, ACTING DEPUTY ASSOCIATE ADMINISTRATOR, OFFICE OF COMMUNICATION, EDUCAITON, AND MEDIA RELATIONS, ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY, FROM REPRESENTATIVE BOB SCHAFFER (R-CO), VICE-CHAIRMAN, SUBCOMMITTEE ON EARLY CHILDHOOD, YOUTH AND FAMILIES

BOB SCHAFFER
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Congress of the United States
House of Representatives

COMMITTEES
Agriculture
Resources
Education and the Workforce
Vice Chairman
Early Childhood, Youth and Families
Republican Policy Committee

June 30, 2000

Mr. John Kasper
Acting Deputy Associate Administrator
Office of Communication, Education, and Media Relations
Environmental Protection Agency
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, D.C. 20460

Dear Mr. Kasper,

Please submit the answers to the following questions you agreed to provide at the June 27, 2000 Subcommittee hearing on "Examining the National Environmental Education Act." Please submit this important information to me by July 14, 2000.

1) Please describe the actions taken by the EPA to correct the abuses by NEEAP as a result of the protest letter (written October 25, 1996) from Dr. Jeffrey Salmon, president of the Marshall Institute to Michael Baker, director of the EPA Office of Environmental Education.

2) The EPA funded a project that produced the "EE Toolbox" which provides suggestions for environmental teaching materials. The Independent Commission on Environmental Education found many of these materials to be biased and one-sided. What has the EPA done to inform teachers, students and parents about the bias in the materials suggested in the EE Toolbox and other materials the EPA offers in its publications and website?

3) Please provide a list of textbooks, curriculum materials, or other information intended for classroom use developed by the EPA which give a fair and balanced treatment of: 1) The so-called "global warming" issue, by providing NASA satellite temperature data for the earth which shows no warming from 1979 to 1998. 2) The "acid rain" issue, by supplying the scientific findings of the National Acid Precipitation Assessment Project, the 10-year study funded by Congress at $500 million which concluded that acid rain is

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not as destructive as previously thought. 3) ' World population," by including the fact that the world population growth rate has been declining since the late 1960s.

4) How much money and/or resources did the EPA contribute directly or indirectly (for example, through NAAEE) to the writing, production or distribution of the book *Promoting Environmental Education: An Action Handbook for Strengthening EE in Your state and Community* by Abby Ruskey and Richard Wilke? On page (iii) of this book, "advocacy and advocate" are defined as, among other things, "lobbying legislators." Explain why the EPA funding for this book should not be viewed as a violation of the anti-lobbying restriction? Assuming it is a violation, what actions has the EPA taken to recover the EPA funds mis-used for this book?

5) Please provide a copy of the videotape "Environmental Education Advocacy: Everyone's Responsibility." How much did the EPA, directly or indirectly, contribute to the production and distribution of this videotape? Assuming the definition of "advocacy" used in this tape is the same as the book *Promoting Environmental Education* mentioned previously, explain why the EPA funding for this videotape should not be viewed as a violation of the anti-lobbying restriction.

6) Please provide information on the amount and uses of funds from NEEAP to organizations and individuals in California, Colorado, Illinois, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Mississippi, Missouri, New Mexico, Pennsylvania, Texas, and Wisconsin from the inception of the NEEAP program. Please include direct grants, funding to pay for meetings and conferences in the states mentioned, and funding for the travel expenses of individuals from these states to attend out-of-state meetings and conferences. Please provide copies of the meeting agendas which include a list of all speakers and the topics of all speeches and meeting sessions.

7) NEEAP newsletters indicate several state organizations which receive EPA funds from NEEAP are engaged in lobbying state legislators in support of the passage of environmental education bills in those states. Explain why the NEEAP funding of these organizations' lobbying activities should not be viewed as a violation of the anti-lobbying restriction.

8) Please provide a cumulative list of all members, including their titles, organizational affiliations and years served, of the National Education Advisory Council from the inception of the council. Provide a list of grants and amounts by year which were awarded by the EPA directly or indirectly (for example, by the NAAEE) to individuals who have been members of the council and the organizations to which members of the council belong. Does the EPA believe there have been any conflicts of interest in the grant recommendations of the council or the grants awarded by the EPA?

9) Please provide a year by year breakdown of the total amount of EPA and NEETF funds appropriated pursuant to the National Environmental Education Act of 1990 that goes directly to K-12 teachers and students. Please indicate the percentage this amount

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represents of the total amount appropriated under the NEE Act of 1990 for each fiscal year since 1990.

10) Please provide a copy of the report "Environmental Science Education Materials Review Guide" published by the EPA in February 1994. If this guide is out-of-print, please provide a copy from the EPA library or any other appropriate source.

11) When the National Environmental Education and Training Foundation (NEETF) was authorized under the National Environmental Education Act of 1990, the intent was for the foundation to become self-sufficient and to rely on private donations rather than government appropriations. What percentage and dollar amount of the NEETF budget is derived from federal funds? What steps have NEETF and EPA taken to increase private donations to the foundation and to decrease NEETF's reliance on federal funds? When will NEETF be completely self-sufficient?

12) How is the Maryland Environmental Business Alliance funded? What is the dollar amount and percentage of funding it receives from grants under the National Environmental Education Act? Does the Alliance receive any funding from any other federal sources, including, but not limited to other EPA grants?

13) Please document concrete examples of National Environmental Education Act environmental education programs and activities in which students studied all sides of an environmental issue and came to conclusions that were contrary to EPA policy positions. Are those students holding conclusions different from EPA encouraged to take political actions such as writing letters to Congressmen opposing EPA policy, holding a press conference announcing their opposition to EPA policy, or testifying before a congressional committee or state legislative committee by NEEA or OEE programs, materials, or administrators?

Thank you for answering these questions which you were unable to answer at the hearing. I look forward to receiving your responses.

Very truly yours,

Bob Schaffer
Vice-Chairman, Subcommittee
On Early Childhood, Youth, and Families

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APPENDIX J -- THE STATEMENT OF THE HONORABLE MICHAEL N. CASTLE, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF DELAWARE, AND CHAIRMAN, SUBCOMMITTEE ON EARLY CHILDHOOD, YOUTH AND FAMILIES

STATEMENT OF THE HONORABLE MICHAEL N. CASTLE
CHAIRMAN, EARLY CHILDHOOD, YOUTH & FAMILIES SUBCOMMITTEE

HEARING ON "EXAMINING THE NATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION ACT."

JUNE 27, 2000

Good morning and welcome to our hearing to examine the National Environmental Education Act. Today, we will review the administration of the Act and learn more about the role of environmental education in our schools, businesses and communities.

For more than twenty years, the federal government has played an important role in providing the necessary resources to support environmental education. In fact, when the National Environmental Education Act was lasted signed into law by President Bush, its supporters noted that a renewed federal role in environmental education was an investment that would prevent

costly environmental disasters and promote the sustainable use of natural resources.

Today, the National Environmental Education Act supports the Office of Environmental Education to help increase public understanding of the environment. Specifically, it develops model environmental curricula and teacher training programs, supports fellowships to encourage the pursuit of environmental professions, and sponsors workshops and conferences to promote environmental education. In addition, the Act establishes a non-profit foundation to encourage cooperation between the public and private sectors and to leverage non-federal investment in support of environmental education.

Learning about the environment is central to the protection of our natural resources and our own human health. In addition, there is a growing body of evidence that environmental education can be a vehicle for connecting other academic disciplines, such as science,

math, social studies and language arts. This type of integration can provide students with the skills and knowledge they need to compete in an increasingly challenging and complex world.

Since 1992, the National Environmental Education Act has provided 2,000 grants to hundreds of schools in every state. In my state of Delaware, for instance, the "Teen Environmental Network," based out of Cape Henlopen High School in Lewes, DE, developed a link between all of the high school environmental clubs in Southern Delaware. I have seen this program first hand, and I strongly endorse the type of age-appropriate environmental activities these programs support. That said, I oppose any efforts to engage children in inappropriate political activities. No child should be required to write to his or her decisionmakers or otherwise participate in lobbying efforts until he or she is able to understand the issue and articulate his or her own position.

For this reason, both bills to reauthorize this bill -- Senator Inhofe's and mine -- seek to specifically prohibit the use of funds to support lobbying activities. In fact, to do so would already be to run-afoul of the very definition of environmental education, which is to enhance critical thinking, problem solving and effective decisionmaking and teach individuals to weigh different sides of an issue and make informed, responsible decisions.

In addition, both bills, renamed the John H. Chafee Environmental Education Act, require activities funded under the Act to be "balanced and scientifically sound." They also creates the John H. Chafee Memorial Fellowship Program to encourage and support graduate level study, establish Presidential awards to recognize the outstanding achievement of students and teachers and authorize the program at $10 and $8 million respectively.

It is my understanding that the Senate passed the Inhofe bill on April 27 by unanimous consent, and my bill, H.R. 4745, is anxiously awaiting committee consideration. It is my hope that we will move forward with reauthorization this year.

In conclusion, I want to thank Senator Inhofe and ranking member Dale Kildee for their help in moving this legislation through the Congress. As all of you will note, this bill is named for the late Senator John H. Chafee -- our former colleague from Rhode Island and a strong advocate for environmental causes. He died last October, but I know he would be very proud of our efforts here today.

Today's witnesses will provide us insight on the operation and how we can improve our National Environmental Education program. In just a moment, I will begin with introductions, but first I will yield to Ranking Member Kildee for any statement he may wish to make.

APPENDIX K -- THE OPENING STATEMENT OF THE HONORABLE JIM INHOFE, UNITED STATES SENATOR FROM THE STATE OF OKLAHOMA AND CHAIRMAN, SUBCOMMITTEE ON CLEAN AIR, WETLANDS, PRIVATE PROPERTY AND NUCLEAR SAFETY

OPENING STATEMENT

Senator Jim Inhofe

Hearing on Environmental Education

House Subcommittee on Early Childhood, Youth and Families

House Education and Workforce Committee

Tuesday June 27, 2000

Thank you Mr. Chairman for inviting me to testify today on this very important topic, Environmental Education. I have introduced legislation to reauthorize the National Environmental Education Act during each of the last three Congresses. It has passed the Senate twice, in the 104th Congress and then again just two months ago today, on April 27th. I am hopeful that the House will Act this year and will pass this legislation. Chairman Castle, I appreciate your interest in this issue and I am pleased that you have introduced a House Companion Bill.

In general this Bill authorizes the work of the National Environmental Education and Training Foundation and the EPA's Office of Environmental Education. The foundation is an important group which leverages their funds with private contributions in awarding grants across the country.

The EPA's Education Office awards grants for programs and teacher training around the country. In my own State of Oklahoma grants have gone to such groups as the local conservation districts, elementary schools, 4-H clubs, the Kaw Indian Nation, and several universities across the State.

There are three specific aspects of the Bill that I would like to address today.

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1) The requirement that the programs be balanced and based on sound science;

2) That recipients can not use the funds for lobbying activities; and most importantly,

3) The renaming of the program to the John H. Chafee Environmental Education Act.

A lot of people wonder why I introduced this Bill, particularly since it involves education programs at the EPA. But, I believe in the environment and I believe in education. I also believe that if our young people are taught these issues in a balanced manner and based on sound science, then they will understand the issues more thoroughly and will be less likely to believe the rhetoric that comes out of Washington, D.C. I think one reason Carol Browner has been so successful in getting her message across is that there has been a lack of balance in information and the scientific issues are not being explained. To those who are critical of all environmental education, I would say you will never be able to stop it, but we can insist on it being balanced, and it will be up to those of us who are skeptical about the messages which come out of Washington to ensure that the information is balanced. There is no such guarantee today without this Bill.

Second, I amended the statute to ensure that the funds are not used for lobbying activities. I'm sure that all of the members here today have received at one time or another a letter from a student, who doesn't understand what they are writing about, but was instructed to do so by a visiting environmentalist, probably without the knowledge of their parents. This would stop the federal funding of these programs.

Finally, out of respect for my old friend John Chafee, who we all respected and miss, I renamed the program in his honor and created five graduate level fellowships in the field of environmental studies; two at the University of Rhode Island and three which will be available to any competing University. By creating this program we will ensure that the Chafee Environmental legacy will live on and that future generations of environmental scholars will be provided the opportunity to study these issues that were so very important to John Chafee.

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APPENDIX L-- LETTER SUBMITTED BY THE HONORABLE RON PAUL, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF TEXAS, FROM MR. JOHN HOPPE, SUGAR LAND, TEXAS

June 26, 2000

The Honorable Ron Paul
Early Childhood, Youth and Families Subcommittee
Committee on Education and the Workforce
Washington, D.C.

Dear Congressman Paul:

I am writing to urge that EPA's authority to conduct environmental education activities not be reauthorized.

I am a father with a child who is elementary school age. My interest in this subject stems from wanting the best for my child. This motivation led me to testify several times before a Texas House of Representatives subcommittee on environmental education, and I personally met with a number of Texas representatives and senators, and with the Texas governor's office.

When one considers the question of whether or not EPA's authority should be reauthorized, fortunately one doesn't have to consider the issue in a vacuum. EPA has a track record in the area of environmental education. When that track record is considered, I think the answer becomes clear. EPA's authority over environmental education should not be reauthorized.

Let's take a look at the record:

Congress first granted EPA authority to conduct environmental education programs and issue grants via the National Environmental Education Act of 1990. The 104th Congress didn't renew EPA's authority and it expired at the end of Fiscal Year 1996. Despite EPA's lack of statutory authority, it continued the operations of its Office of Environmental Education and issued grants every year from FY 1997 through 2000.

What has EPA been doing with the unauthorized money it has been spending? One of the largest recipients has been the National Environmental Education Advancement Project (NEEAP) at the University of Wisconsin, Stevens Point. NEEAP exists to develop and train political activists in the states. These activists form coalitions that pressure state and local officials to adopt a comprehensive environmental education program requiring that children be trained in political action skills.

What this means is the EPA (through its Office of Environmental Education) is funding a program that builds political coalitions in the states which lobby state legislators to pass more state mandates requiring the teaching of environmental education, establishing grants programs funded by state moneys, and creating state funded bureaucracies to supervise the implementation of these programs.

Are these programs based on objective presentation of science? Are there adequate safeguards to assure parents that their children are not being politicized? No! To the contrary, these political coalitions have vigorously fought attempts to insure objective presentation of science and to insure that their children will not be politicized.

I can state this with a degree of confidence inasmuch as I personally was part of an effort that attempted to insure an EPA-affiliated organization's initiative in Texas included such guarantees. Those pushing the

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initiative initially argued that it would not be possible to provide for sound science in the law and for safeguards against politicization. When presented with language that would accomplish just that, political trickery was resorted to in order to sidestep the issue and preserve the vague language that would permit agenda-driven indoctrination. That very doable safeguards were circumvented was a clear signal as to motives.

But, is there any evidence that children have actually ever been exploited to advance agenda-driven environment agendas? On Earth Day, 1998, the Sierra Club took fourth grade students to downtown Denver where they were given a "lesson" on endangered species. Then the teacher and some of the students mounted the podium before a crowd of reports to denounce the environmental voting record of U.S. Senator Ben Nighthorse Campbell.

It's time for Congress to consider carefully EPA's role in environmental education and not only deny authorization of EPA's authority in environmental education, but must also specifically deauthorize it and deny funding. Schoolchildren across our nation need to be presented with a broad diversity of scientific facts and theories on the subject of the environment, along with the critical thinking skills in order to reason through for themselves and arrive at their own conclusions.

Further, it is against our tradition and best interests for our school children to be taught values that line up with agendas of federal agencies, activists or special interest groups. Values teaching (or values clarification) should not be sponsored by Congress via authorization of EPA's continued role. Nor should school children be exploited by first being propagandized in the classroom, and then being taught political action in school where they are enlisted to actively lobby their parents and our state and federal legislatures.

The EPA has proven to be an unfaithful steward of the charge Congress once gave it with regards to environmental education. It has long had no authority in this area, but apparently the sweet savor of generations of brainwashed student activists pushing for EPA's policy agenda was simply too attractive to let go. It is time for Congress to affirmatively act to accomplish what the simple lapse of authority was unable to do. Congress should and must not only deny authorization of EPA's authority in environmental education -- Congress must also specifically deauthorize it.

Sincerely,

John Hoppe

John Hoppe
5622 Whisper Ridge Drive
Sugar Land, Texas 77479

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